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COLUMELLA AND THE BEGINNING OF SOIL SCIENCE

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Subsequent generations have acclaimed Lucius Junius Moderatus Columella the soundest and most comprehensive of all Roman agricultural writers.¹ Columella, however, considered himself a disciple of the poet Vergil, whose *Georgics* were the inspiration for *De re rustica*. Throughout the volume, Columella repeatedly quoted Vergil, and seldom without some comment of esteem. Twelve of his thirteen books were written in prose, but that on gardening was written in poetry after the style of Vergil's *Georgics*. Although requested to write this book by his patron, Silvinus, Columella confessed that he would not have had the courage to emulate so great an authority and poet had not Vergil, himself, requested it. In the *Georgics*, gardening was the only phase of farming omitted, and Vergil bequeathed the task of completing his work to "some future poet." Columella not only completed the work of Vergil but expanded it areally. Whereas Vergil wrote for the farmers of a united Italy, Columella dedicated his advice to "future Husbandmen of Italian extraction, and also to those who are born in the Provinces."²

Very little is known of Columella himself. He was born about the beginning of the first century, A.D., in Spain, probably of Roman parentage, and was a citizen of Cadiz. Since he made no mention of his parents, it seems probable that he was brought up by his uncle, Marcus Columella, a citizen of some importance and an excellent farmer, with a flair for experimenting. Although Columella was educated in Rome, his early agricultural training in Spain is evident throughout his writings.

More than any other Roman author, Columella was concerned with the soil and the way it should be used. On one point he differed radically from his contemporaries, including men as well versed in husbandry as Cornelius Celsus. Color alone was no guide to productivity. Although black soil was generally rated highest, Columella doubted if any farmer would be foolish enough to expect good grain crops from the black soil of marshes. Conversely, the light-colored soils of Libya produced the world's highest yields. Structure, texture, and acidity or alkalinity were far better guides to the productivity of soil.

¹This article is one of a series by Lois Olson and Helen L. Eddy on Cato, Vergil, Columella, Ibn-al-Awam, Pietro de Crescenzi, Leonardo da Vinci, and the Paulini brothers as pioneer soil conservationists of the western Mediterranean world. For the articles of the series already published, see: "From the Archives of Old Venice [Guiseppe and Girolamo Paulini's plan of erosion control and river regulation for Venice]," U. S. Department of Agriculture, *Soil Conservation*, 6:265-268 (April 1941); and "Ibn-al-Awam: A Soil Scientist of Moorish Spain," *Geographical Review*, 33:100-109 (January 1943).

²*De re rustica*, 3(13):1, in Lucius Junius Moderatus Columella, *Of Husbandry; In Twelve Books; and His Book concerning Trees*, translated into English, 142 (London, 1745). Hereafter, this edition is cited as: Columella, *Of Husbandry*.

A crumb structure like that found naturally in meadows Columella considered best. If moistened and pressed gently, the soil should stick slightly to the fingers, and it should not break into "small bits" if dropped. As a further test, he suggested digging a trench and then replacing the soil that had been removed. If it did not fill the hole completely, the soil was lean; if some were left over, the soil was fat. For salinity and alkalinity, he recommended testing by taste. A mixture of soil and water was first allowed to settle, then it was strained and tasted. As a guide to land use, none of these tests compared with careful observation of the natural vegetation of the region. Crops should always resemble, as closely as possible, the plants that nature had designed for the area. In all of these tests, Columella agreed fully with Vergil and cited him as authority.

Columella, however, is the first of the Roman authors to comment upon the difference between the surface and subsoils, saying "we should not be content with the first appearance of the surface soil, but should take pains to investigate the character of what lies beneath—whether it be earthy or not."³ Apparently he realized that hardpan, formed below the surface, interfered like stone with drainage and with the root development of crops.

From the beginning of his treatise, Columella consistently denied the current reports that the soil had worn out and could no longer produce crops as bountiful as those of the past. The farmers, themselves, were at fault. Even Cato, the Censor, was no stronger in denouncing commercial farms owned by absentee landlords. To support his convictions, Columella quoted the greatest of all agricultural authorities, Mago the Carthaginian,⁴ who five hundred years earlier advised those who purchased farms to sell their city homes so that their interests might not be divided. To this Columella added, "Of how many [farmers], in fact, is it the lot to survey all parts of this science, so as thoroughly to understand the practice of cropping and plowing and to have an accurate knowledge of the varied and very unlike types of soil."⁵

The basis of Columella's theory of land utilization was diversified farming. If it was still available, he recommended that farmers purchase land with fertile soil, partly level and partly on the hills, and with slopes facing south or east. To this he added:

The level ground, divided into meadows, arable land, willow groves, and reed thickets should be adjacent to the steading. Let some of the hills be bare of trees, to serve for grain crops only; still these crops thrive better in moderately dry and fertile plains than in steep places, and for that reason even the higher grain fields should have some level sections and should be of as gentle a slope as possible and very much like flat land. Again other hills

³*De re rustica*, 2(2)21, in Lucius Junius Moderatus Columella, *On Agriculture*, with English translation by Harrison Boyd Ash, 121 (Cambridge, Mass., 1942). Hereafter, this work is cited as: Columella, *On Agriculture*. The quotations from this edition are reprinted by permission of the President and Fellows of Harvard College.

⁴Mago's treatise on agriculture was the only Carthaginian literature deemed worthy of translation into Latin. During the chaos of the Middle Ages, the original and its translations were completely lost to the world, and today they are known only through quotation.

⁵*De re rustica*, 1, preface, 24, in Columella, *On Agriculture*, 19.

should be clad with olive groves and vineyards, and with copses to supply props for the later . . . as well as grazing ground for herds; and then they should send down coursing rivulets into the meadows, gardens, and willow plantations, and running water for the villa. And let there be no lack of herds of cattle and other four-footed kind to graze over the tilled land and the thickets.⁶

To Columella the conflict between plowmen and herdsmen was more apparent than real. While one preferred tilled land, free of grass and herbs, the other valued pasture plants above all other products of the soil. A farmer, however, would find it more profitable to feed the fodder that he raised to his own cattle than to those of strangers, especially since livestock furnished the dung so necessary for maintaining the fertility of his fields and orchards. So profitable, in turn, was the cattle trade that the Latin word for money, *pecunia*, was derived from *pecus*, meaning a head of cattle.

Columella, like Cato, considered good plowing the essence of good farming. He advised farmers, repeatedly, to plow deeply and thoroughly so that the rain water would sink into the ground instead of running off, carrying with it the soil from the slopes. In order to plow deeply the oxen were to be yoked in such a manner that their strength was not dissipated but transferred to the plow. The purchase of cheap, small oxen was false economy since they could pull only light plows that barely scratched the surface. Higher crop yields would more than balance the additional cost of larger oxen.

On sloping lands Columella insisted "that the furrow be always drawn cross the hill."⁷ Not only did this reduce the strain on the oxen and the plowmen, but it also prevented the soil from washing downhill. In a second or third plowing the furrows might be run obliquely, but with only a slight slope.

The time of plowing differed with the character of the topography and soil. Where the soil was light and dried quickly after the winter rains, it could be plowed early in the spring. Heavy soils or poorly drained bottom lands were plowed later in the season, after they had dried out somewhat. Farmers were cautioned never to touch the soil when it was mirey or sticky, or when a light rain, following a drought, had merely wet the surface of the ground. In the former case, plowing destroyed the structure of the soil, so that it dried out in solid masses; in the latter, a hard crust formed on the surface. Both destroyed the permeability of the soil, increased run-off and erosion, and prevented normal root growth. If the structure of the soil were destroyed by ill-timed plowing, the land might remain unproductive for several years, even though considerable effort was made to restore the soil structure by corrective plowing and fertilizing.

One of the best safeguards against the formation of massive soils was the production of close-growing plants, preferably meadow or leguminous crops. Meadow soils were particularly commended by Columella because they provided a source of income even in years of crop failure and because, without much labor or expense, they were always in a condition suitable for cultivation. All plowing

⁶*De re rustica*, 1(2):3-5, in *ibid.*, 41-42.

⁷*De re rustica*, 2(4):10, in Columella, *Of Husbandry*, 59.

had as its goal the artificial creation of a crumb structure resembling the natural structure of meadow soils. In addition, the roots of the grass bound the soil together so that it would not wash away "in tempestuous and stormy weather," as was the case on other parts of the farm.

Columella also recommended meadows because they provided a double source of profit—first from hay and then from pasturage. For this reason he urged great care in selecting meadow sites, and in tending meadows until they were well established. If the land was newly cleared, it should be planted in grain the first year in order to capitalize upon the virgin fertility of the soil.

Clearing and plowing preceded planting. In the lowlands drainage also might be needed, with the addition of ashes or lime to destroy the acidity. Where the soil was dense open drains were adequate, provided their banks sloped so that the drain was narrower at the bottom than at the top, "for those whose sides are perpendicular are quickly eroded by water and are filled in by the slipping of the earth above."⁸ Where the soil was highly erodible, Columella preferred closed drains like those described by Cato. If the soil were both dry and easily eroded, caution was also needed in irrigating the land. Under such conditions Columella advised: "in a loose soil it is not wise to let in too heavy a flow of water before the ground is packed and bound together by vegetation, because the force of the water washes away the soil and, by exposing the roots, does not allow the grass to gain a foothold."⁹

Columella recommended that cattle be kept off the meadows until a sod was established. Their hoofs cut the roots and loosened the soil. Hogs were particularly destructive because they rooted with their snouts and tore up plants and soil. The second year smaller animals like sheep might be admitted to the meadows and by the third year, "when the meadow is quite solid and firm, it will be in a condition to receive even the larger cattle."

Of all the fodder crops, Columella rated medic or alfalfa [*Medicago sativa*] most highly because "one seeding affords, for all of ten years thereafter, four harvestings regularly and sometimes six; it improves the soil; lean cattle of every kind grow fat on it; it has medical value for an ailing beast; and one *jugerum* of it provides abundant fodder for three horses for an entire year."¹⁰ In addition to fertilizing the soil, the roots of alfalfa bound it together, retarded run-off, and prevented soil washing.

Lupines, like alfalfa, improved the soil, could be purchased cheaply, and would grow even on barren land. Consequently, they met with Columella's approval. Beans of various types he considered less beneficial to the soil, unless the stubble was plowed under. He recommended that the plow follow immediately after the scythe to cut the roots and stubble and cover them with earth. Under no circumstances should the plants be torn from the ground by their roots, since this would destroy their value as a fertilizer. Where the soil was particularly poor, he recommended that straw be spread on the ground and plowed under.

⁸*De re rustica*, 2(2):9, in Columella, *On Agriculture*, 115.

⁹*De re rustica*, 2(17):5-7, in *ibid.*, 211.

¹⁰*De re rustica*, 2(10):25, in *ibid.*, 173. A *jugerum* is approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ acre.

In the first century A.D., the vine provided the chief cash crop in both Italy and Spain. Columella, consequently, devoted a larger portion of *De re rustica* to the selection of vines for various types of sites and to their cultivation than to any of the field crops. In general vineyards were situated on easily eroded slopes. Columella particularly recommended the lower slopes "which have received the soil that washes down from their summits" because these positions were most fertile.¹¹

Unless the land were level, continuous production always required some measure of protection for the soil. In general, this was provided by cultivation. The soil around the base of the vines was dug up monthly from the first of March to the first of October. In the fall special precautions were taken before the onset of the rainy season. Regardless of slope or climate all vines were "ablaquaeted" at this season. This involved excavating around the base of the vines to cut the shallow roots and force the others to penetrate deeper into the soil. The soil was removed for a depth of about a foot and a half. In areas where the winters were mild, the pit was not completely refilled with earth. Columella noted this practice had been recommended by Cato two hundred years earlier and by Mago the Carthaginian, three hundred years before him. Where there was greater danger of winter freezing, the pit was completely refilled, but the porous soil still absorbed the run-off from above. Complete refilling was commended to Columella by Vergil, whose childhood was spent on his father's farm in Cisalpine Gaul, where winter freezing might be expected every year.

Both Cato and Vergil advised that the vines be planted in holes or trenches and that the vines of one row be placed opposite the unplanted spaces in the rows on either side. When the vines were ablaquaeted, each excavated area then served as a catch basin for the comparatively small drainage space above it. The same method was used in planting and cultivating olives. In the latter case Columella recommended that furrows be "drawn from the higher part, which may convey the muddy water to the stock of the tree." The same practice was probably observed in vineyards, though it is not mentioned specifically.¹² He also added that the holes or trenches should be dug preferably a year and never less than two months in advance of planting so that the soil might mellow. His description of planting methods is nearly identical with those employed by the more progressive planters of today in the hilly lands of the Dutch East Indies.¹³

In general, however, Columella discarded trench planting in favor of "pastination" in which the entire vineyard was dug up uniformly so that the earth "might give admittance to celestial showers and dispense them for nourishing the plants." Pastination was usually performed by digging a series of parallel trenches. The diggers threw the soil that they removed over their shoulders into the adjoining trench and continued the process until the entire field had been

¹¹*De re rustica*, 3(11):8, in *ibid.*, 305.

¹²*De re rustica*, 5(9), in Columella, *Of Husbandry*, 241.

¹³S. Gillett, "Report on a Visit to Southern India and Java; 2, The Coffee Industry of Java (N.E.I.)," *East African Agricultural Journal*, 2:149-163 (Nairobi, Kenya Colony 1936).

covered, and the soil had been thoroughly mixed. On level land pastination to a depth of $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet was sufficient; on sloping land as much as 4 feet might be necessary in order to have enough loose soil for leveling the pastinated area. In Italy, vines were commonly planted on pastinated terraces. Columella regretted that the practice was not more general in the provinces.

In the chapter on the pastination of vineyards, Columella used terms that are now obsolete, but were apparently in common usage in his time. Consequently, although his instructions are detailed, modern scholars have considerable difficulty in interpreting them exactly. From scattered references throughout *De re rustica* it seems evident that pastinated vineyards were leveled before being planted.¹⁴ This interpretation is further supported by Columella's detailed description of a field level—an ancestor of the rafter level used by the farmers of colonial Virginia.¹⁵ Besides serving as a level, it measured the breadth and depth of the trenches.

Most Roman farmers used a one-legged instrument known as a *ciconia*, or stork, to check on the measurements of the trenches. These were the same width at the top and bottom, and, since they were refilled after the vines were planted, the vertical walls did not increase the erosion hazard. The *ciconia* was a simple T-square with a crosspiece the width of the trench and a leg equal to its depth. At best the *ciconia* was inaccurate because of the difficulty in holding it in an absolutely vertical position. To eliminate error, Columella added crossbars in the form of an X. The horizontal distance between the legs was the same length as the horizontal bar of the *ciconia* and the vertical distance from the point of intersection to the base was equal to the depth of the trench. A third bar was extended across the top of the X and a carpenter's plumb was suspended from the middle. The X was then superimposed on the *ciconia* at the middle point of the crossbar. If the instrument were placed vertically with its feet at exactly the same level, the plumb would swing freely and fall opposite the point of intersection. The legs of the cross and the crossbar of the *ciconia* would just touch the lower and upper corners of the trench if its measurements were exact. By stepping the instrument across a hillside, a level line could be determined, and a terrace laid out accordingly.¹⁶

Even though farms might specialize in vines, olives, or grain, Columella considered animal husbandry essential. It was the oldest, and most honorable of all professions, as well as one of the most profitable. The old Greeks had called bulls *Itales*, and from this Italy, itself, had derived its name. All farmers, Columella said, "should thoroughly understand the management of cattle, as well as the culture of lands." To this he added:

And by plentiful dunging, which is owing to flocks and herds of cattle, the earth produces her fruits in great abundance: nor yet is there any country, provided there is corn produced

¹⁴Columella, *Of Husbandry*, 150-151.

¹⁵A. R. Hall, "Early Erosion-Control Practices in Virginia," U. S. Department of Agriculture, *Miscellaneous Publication 256*, p. 17-18 (Washington, D. C., 1937).

¹⁶*De re rustica*, 3(13), in Columella, *Of Husbandry*, 145-146.

in it, which does not receive great benefit and advantage from the help and assistance of all sorts of great cattle, as well as of men.¹⁷

While Columella recommended legumes and green manures to improve the soil, he rated dung far higher. In general he agreed with his predecessors concerning the relative merits of different types, ranking pigeon dung highest and that of pigs lowest. About the application of dung, he was more specific than earlier writers. Higher and leaner lands, he said, could be dunged as early as the middle of February, before the winter rains had completely ceased. In this way, he said, "the more elevated slope supplies nourishment to the land that lies below when a pouring rain or a hand conducted rivulet carries the liquid manure along with its own waters to the part below. . . ."¹⁸

Prudent husbandmen not only followed this practice but also spread more dung on the slopes than in the low lying fields because the "rains are forever carrying all the richer matter down to the lowland."¹⁹ The dung was first deposited in heaps of 5 *modii* each;²⁰ then spread evenly over the soil and plowed under immediately. No more manure was placed in the fields than could be plowed under the same day. On sloping lands the dung piles were placed about 6 feet apart, but on level land the interval might be increased to 8 feet. Sloping land required dung at the rate of 24 loads of 80 *modii* each per *jugerum*, whereas level land required but 18.

Columella realized that some sections of Italy and Spain were not well suited to animal production. Even so, lack of compost was to him a sign of a slothful husbandman. Any farmer could sink a pit and gather into it refuse from the farmyard and household, straw and stubble, and other waste material. The compost was allowed to rot and then was applied to cultivated fields, meadows, and orchards.

Lacking compost of any sort, a farmer could still follow the example of Marcus Columella, who threw chalk or marl on gravelly places, and coarser soil on land that was too dense or clayey. In this way, Columella said, his uncle had raised excellent crops of grain and "most beautiful vineyards."

In *De re rustica* Columella did not limit himself to soil and its culture but discussed all phases of farm life—the house site, diseases of cattle and their cures, methods of gardening and grafting, the duties of the overseer and his wife, and even recipes for preserving fruit, curing meat, and making wine. Today, however, he is most commended for his contribution to the understanding of soils and of their behavior under crops and cultivation.

Even in this field Columella contributed little that was new. The value of *De re rustica* lies rather in its comprehensive and scientific analysis of past experience combined with an experimental approach to agricultural problems. Columella accepted nothing on faith alone. He knew and quoted agricultural

¹⁷*De re rustica*, 6, preface, in *ibid.*, 255.

¹⁸*De re rustica*, 2(17):7, in Columella, *On Agriculture*, 211.

¹⁹*Ibid.*

²⁰A *modius* was approximately one peck.

authorities from Hesiod (800 B.C.) to his own contemporaries, but he never hesitated to disagree with them on the basis of practical experience. Since no art or science could be perfected "by the genius or capacity of a single man" Columella urged further experimentation. He expressed the philosophy of all experimental agriculture when he urged:

. . . not content with the authority of either former or present day husbandmen, we must hand down our own experiences and set ourselves to experiments as yet untried. This practice, though sometimes detrimental in part, nevertheless proves advantageous on the whole; because no field is tilled without profit if the owner, through much experimentation, causes it to be fitted for the use which it can best serve. Such management also increases the profit from the most fertile land. Accordingly there should be no neglect, anywhere, of experimentation in many forms; and far greater daring should be shown on rich soil, because the return will not render the toil and expense a total loss.²¹

²¹*De re rustica*, 1(4):4-5, in Columella, *On Agriculture*, 55.

LAND OWNERSHIP, FARM TENANCY, AND FARM LABOR IN BRITAIN

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No more than a broad sketch of so large and intricate a subject can be attempted in a short paper.* Some aspects have necessarily had to be omitted altogether and, as regards the others, it has been thought best to deal mainly with recent developments and current tendencies.

LAND OWNERSHIP AND TENANCY

Most British land, in medieval times, was held on feudal tenures, although Celtic tribal ownership persisted long in Wales and in the Highlands of Scotland, and there was a little of the old Scandinavian odal tenure in the extreme north.

The legal theory of feudal tenure was that all land belonged to the King and that, when he granted the use of land to a subject (either in perpetuity or for a term of years), he did so in return for an undertaking to perform certain duties. The most important of these was to produce stipulated numbers of armed men—knights, archers, pikemen, etc.—in time of war. It was obviously a matter of convenience to make grants of land in large parcels rather than small. The unit grant was indeed the relatively small manor (England) or the very variable barony (Scotland), but an individual feudal lord ordinarily held a number of units, sometimes a very large number.

Originally the main duty of the actual cultivator, in return for the use of his land, is presumed to have been that of military service. Feudal lords, in course of time, found it preferable to maintain groups of professional men-at-arms and other retainers and began to exact from their tenants, instead of armed service, either labor or goods. In southern England the holder of a virgate of land might pay for his lord's protection by working one day a week on the lord's demesne (central farm) and by supplying small quantities of goods. In other areas, particularly in Scotland, services were comparatively light, and the bulk of the dues were paid in the form of farm produce. A typical extract from a Scottish fifteenth-century rental might read: "*Township of Balnakyle*. The six tenants pay jointly at Martinmas six merks Scots money [say two dollars]. Also they pay jointly 24 bolls oatmeal, 12 bolls barley, 2 marts [steers], 6 sheep, 12 lambs, 48 poultry fowls, 12 capons; 24 doz. eggs and 24 salmon fishes. And they shall win and carry 12 load peats [as fuel for the lord's household]. And they shall do 24 dargs [days' work]."

* This paper was prepared for presentation as part of the symposium on "Agrarian Policies, Past and Present" arranged by the Agricultural History Society as its joint session with the American Historical Association which was to have been held at Columbus, Ohio, on December 31, 1942.—*Editor*.

As early as the twelfth century in the south of England, and later elsewhere, there began the process of substituting money payments for goods and services. The ultimate fortunes of the tenant's posterity, or of his successors in his holding, depended much on the decision whether such commutation was made on a temporary or on a permanent basis. In the years following the Black Death, when a great many dues were commuted, the normal laborer's wage was a penny a day. If, as frequently happened, this rate was set for all time, the occupant, five centuries later, would still be paying only a few shillings a year as his manorial dues for a farm of 50 or 100 acres. Payments in kind were similarly commuted, at figures like a penny for a hen or a score of eggs and a shilling for a sheep. The final abolition of such "copyhold" tenures occurred only after World War I, when the last relics of the feudal system were swept away and the once proud title of lord of the manor became meaningless. In fact, most copyholds had been redeemed by capital payments much earlier.

On the other hand, if services and payments in kind were commuted only for a term of years, the farmer, instead of finding himself the virtual owner of his land, ultimately became a tenant paying an ordinary cash rent. There were many other happenings that could change the status of land. A holding might revert to the lord for lack of heirs; at times tenants absconded or voluntarily gave up their holdings; a tenant, for some special service, might be given the freehold of his farm; again, in course of time, the lord's demesne farms were mostly leased to tenants for money rents. By these and other accidents of history there grew up the present-day complex mixture of owner-operated farms and large and small landed estates, operated mainly by tenants.

The proportion of owner-operated to leased farms has changed from time to time. The causes of change have been complex, and some of them are still matters of argument. It must suffice here to say that, despite occasional movements in the opposite direction, the general trend has been towards tenancy. Today some three-fourths of the British farmers are tenants. The decline of the yeomanry—family farmers owning their own acres—has often been deplored, but no definite or effective action has been taken to check or reverse the trend. Rather has farm tenancy been accepted as an established institution, and the main concern of the Government has been to prevent the abuses to which the system is prone.

It is possibly worth noting that a system which worked tolerably well in Great Britain failed so completely in Ireland that it was abolished by the Government. The different fate of the tenancy system is largely to be explained by the difference in conditions between the two countries. By and large, the owners of land in Great Britain have lived on their estates and have played a real part in the economic and social life of their communities. They have liked to see their farms efficiently operated and their tenants reasonably prosperous. They have, in past times, invested great sums in farmhouses, barns, drainage systems, etc. They have lent support to their tenantry in times of agricultural depression and have remitted rents in bad seasons. Many have been leaders of agricultural

progress, demonstrating new methods of cultivation on their home farms and helping the cause of livestock improvement. Their womenfolk have accepted the duty of taking care of the sick and needy. In the old days, indeed, their rule was often despotic, but their despotism was only rarely malevolent.

By contrast, the owners of Irish land were largely English after the conquest, and few had any understanding of, or sympathy with, their Irish tenants. They saw their estates as rarely as possible and mostly left the management to Irish agents who were little more than rent collectors and who, because their profession was generally despised by their patriotic and decent countrymen, were often unscrupulous and dishonest. This being so, the British Government, in a rather praiseworthy if belated attempt to right an old wrong, gave every Irish tenant the opportunity to buy his farm on very easy terms. At the time of the Irish Land Purchase half a century ago, interest rates on Government borrowings were very low, with the consequence that the land annuities paid by the former tenants were generally substantially less than their former rents. The Act, indeed, as is well known, failed in its purpose of bringing general contentment to rural Ireland; and the refusal of the Government of Eire to continue payment of the land annuities after the secession was the cause of a bitter quarrel. The step, in itself, was both well judged and well meant.

BRITISH LAW OF LANDLORD AND TENANT

Before the first effective Agricultural Holdings Act (1883), the two parties to a farm tenancy were free to arrange such conditions as they might agree. In many sections of the country the tenant depended for security on a long lease. Fourteen or nineteen years were normal in many counties. In special cases, e.g., where there was moorland, woodland, or marsh to reclaim, leases were even longer. One farm in the writer's home county, for example, was let about 1800 for "the life of the tenant and that of his nearest heir and thrice nineteen years." The long lease certainly gave the tenant time to reap the benefit of such improvements as he might make and, in cases where he wished to renew his tenancy, "end-of-lease farming" could be avoided by negotiating a new agreement two years before the expiry of the old. Otherwise, in those last two years, a tenant could indulge freely in soil robbery. A more important objection was that the long lease, at a fixed money rent, often turned out to be grossly inequitable to one or the other party. In periods of rising prices the tenant might gain a great deal; in times of deepening depression he could be saved from disaster only through the voluntary remission of rent by his landlord.

In other sections of the country local customs grew up which provided security by other means—a year-to-year agreement but with a year's notice to terminate, and compensation, according to agreed principles, for the unexhausted value of the tenant's improvements. The natural counterpart to payment for "tenant right" was the landlord's right to compensation for any deterioration of the farm caused by the incompetence of the tenant or by his neglect of "the rules of good husbandry." At the termination of the tenancy, claims were presented by either

party to an agreed arbiter, whose award was made on the facts of the case and on the established custom of the district.

The first important advocate of a general farm-tenancy law was Philip Pusey, a wealthy landowner and the first editor of the Royal Agricultural Society of England. As a result of rather extensive inquiries he concluded that the best and most equitable of the various English tenancy customs was that of Lincolnshire. It gave what he considered to be essential, namely "reasonable security to the good tenant in the occupancy of his farm with proper compensation, at his out-going, for improvements." Pusey embodied the Lincolnshire custom in a bill which, however, he could not persuade Parliament to pass. It was not until 1875 that the first Agricultural Holdings Act was signed, and even this proved ineffective because it was merely permissive—i.e., it still remained possible to make valid agreements to which the Act would not apply. A slightly modified law, which governed all agreements for agricultural tenancies of one year or more, was passed in 1883.

This Act laid down a minimum of one year's notice of termination of a tenancy. It directed that a tenant should, under certain conditions, be compensated at the end of his lease for the remaining value of any improvements he had carried out and that, on the other hand, the landowner should be compensated for "dilapidation" of the holding caused by the tenant's failure to operate the land according to ordinary good practice.

Improvements were classified for the purposes of the Act in three groups, and the classification still stands. First are such as liming, the use of fertilizers, and the seeding of land to temporary pastures—improvements that are part and parcel of ordinary sound agricultural practice, and for which the farmer is required neither to give notice nor to get consent. In the second category is drainage. Here the tenant, in order to safeguard his right to compensation, must give notice to the landowner of his intention to carry out drainage works; the landlord then has the option of allowing the tenant to proceed (and automatically undertaking to pay compensation) or of carrying out the operation at his own expense. In the third list are such improvements as the creation of fixed buildings and the seeding of land to permanent pasture. Here the tenant, in order to insure compensation, must obtain the owner's consent, which the owner is entitled to refuse.

The value of all improvements (the actual value to the succeeding occupier at the change of tenancy, without regard to their original cost) is appraised either by a single arbiter who has been mutually appointed, or by one representative of each party, with power, in case of disagreement, to appoint a final arbiter. The cost of making good any dilapidations is estimated by the same men, and the difference between the two sums is paid by landlord to tenant or vice versa.

Under this first Act it was still permissible for the owner to specify the system of cropping, etc., that the tenant must pursue. He could set a rotation of crops for the cultivated land, and prohibit the sale of hay, straw, roots, etc., in order that their fertility value might be retained on the farm. The next major change

was to introduce the principle of freedom of cropping, with the only notable exception that the landlord might still exact a penalty for the breaking up of permanent pasture. The tenant could indeed still be required to leave the farm land, at the end of his tenancy, in specified proportions of grain, roots, clover, pasture, etc., but otherwise, under the law as it still stands, he merely undertakes to cultivate the land "according to the rules of good husbandry" as these are interpreted by a qualified appraiser with knowledge of the soil and of local good practice.

Two further principles were embodied in 1921. The one is that of a "fair rent." At any time after three years from the commencement of a tenancy, the tenant may apply for a reduction of rent or the landowner may apply for an increase. In the event of failure to agree, the matter must be referred to arbitration. If the parties fail to agree on the selection of a particular arbiter, the Minister of Agriculture selects and appoints a man from a standing official list. Only men of recognized competence and probity, and of wide experience, are selected for this official panel.

The second principle introduced in 1921 was that of "compensation for disturbance." If a tenant is operating a farm in a satisfactory manner and has paid the whole rent due, and if his tenancy is terminated by the landlord, he can claim, in addition to compensation for improvements, a sum to reimburse him for the expense of moving to another farm. The assessment is again made by the arbiter, but it is the common understanding that, in the absence of special circumstances of hardship, the sum awarded shall be equivalent to one year's rent of the farm.

In order to get rid of an undesirable tenant without paying "disturbance money," an owner must obtain from the Agricultural Committee of the County Council a certificate bearing that the farm is not being operated according to the rules of good husbandry—commonly called a "certificate of bad farming."

It will be noted that the law has been repeatedly changed to the advantage of the tenant. It is no matter for surprise that tenants now no longer ask for long leases; the common tenancy—which runs from year to year until one party or the other gives a year's notice to terminate—gives all the security that could reasonably be demanded. Again it is not surprising that British farmers (who, in general, have never had much ambition to own their farms) are now definitely averse to ownership. A farmer will rarely buy if he can rent the kind of farm that he wants.

The main anxiety now is whether the landowner will be able or willing, for the future, to fulfil what are regarded as his normal responsibilities—the maintenance and the modernization when necessary of farmhouse, hired men's houses, barns, farm roadways, and drainage systems. Many of the old landowning families have been impoverished by agricultural depression, by heavy taxation, and particularly by steadily mounting rates of death duty. Landowning for many years past has not in fact been a business proposition for the private individual, and the number of people who will be able to afford to own land,

and will be content to do so for reasons other than the money income which it brings, is likely in the future to be small. In the past, when an old family was obliged to sell out, a wealthy businessman was usually available to take over, but such men may in future be too few. Meantime the chief buyers of landed estates are universities, colleges, and other endowed institutions, together with financial and insurance companies. Such bodies, naturally, are exempt from death duties, and many of them regard it as sound financial policy to invest some of their resources in real estate, even if the return is relatively low. It is, however, highly doubtful whether they will be willing to take over all the land that private owners may have to sell.

One view is that the burdens on the private landowner have become excessive, and must be eased. Another is that the day of private landownership is done and that the time has come for the Nation to assume the ownership of its farm lands. A third and middle view is that owners whose estates are in good shape should be left to carry on, but that the State should be prepared, and should assume power, to take over any farms that are not being adequately maintained. Tenant purchase, on the lines of the Irish solution, is rarely mentioned as a possibility.

THE HIRED MAN

The Industrial Revolution, which according to the older historians began in 1760 and ended in 1810, was necessarily accompanied by an agricultural revolution. As manufactures moved from the farm kitchen and the village home into the factory town, the remaining rural folk became whole-time producers of food and fiber. Farming became a business with a money profit rather than a family subsistence as its aim. Wherever soil, climate, and markets favored the production of a particular commodity, the farmer tended to concentrate on that particular product. In grain-growing sections large units of land were required for low-cost production, and landowners rearranged their land in larger farms to meet the demand. When the heaths, moorlands, and wooded areas, as well as the old sheepwalk tracts of the wolds and downs, were settled and reclaimed (mostly in the period, 1780-1860), they were again usually laid out in farms of several hundred acres. Many small freeholders, unable to meet the double competition of the factory and the commercial farm, sold out and migrated to the mining and industrial towns, or emigrated, or alternatively became hired men.

Despite the growing outlets for labor in trade and industry, despite emigration, and despite the increase in the cultivated area of Britain, the supply of farm workers, from about 1790 onwards, constantly exceeded the demand. The immediate reason was the great rise in the rate of increase of population, especially in rural areas. This rise can be partly, but only partly, explained by the virtual disappearance of bubonic plague and the introduction of preventive measures against smallpox and other epidemic diseases. It may serve as a warning to latter-day prophets to recall that in 1696 Gregory King (a very competent statistician) predicted that England's population might rise to

7,350,000 by 1900. In fact, it passed ten million about 1810, sixteen million in 1841, and thirty-two million in 1900.

The flooded labor market in the period around 1800 kept farm wages at a very low level and when, towards the end of the Napoleonic wars, food prices rose almost to famine level, there was widespread and extreme distress among the farm laboring population. At this time there grew up in southern England the practice of supplementing the hired-man's wage out of local taxes (parish rates). Local magistrates from time to time fixed subsistence scales that took account of the number of the workers' children and varied with the price of bread. If the wage was below the subsistence level then payment was made from parish funds of the amount required to make up the difference. Unfortunately this arrangement, apart from proving ruinous to the morale of the laborer, started a vicious spiral. Farmers had no compunction about hiring men at ridiculously low wages, and made the rising poor tax an excuse for still further reductions. The system was abolished in 1834, but not before it had done serious harm.

From 1834 till the end of the first World War, no attempt was made by the Government to regulate rates of farm wages. In the interval, however, there were various efforts to unionize the workers. The first major success was achieved by the National Agricultural Laborers' Union, organized by Joseph Arch, and formed in 1872. This not only succeeded in raising wages to some extent but helped to move workers from congested areas to others where labor was in better demand. It also claimed to have assisted no fewer than 700,000 people to emigrate and it was largely instrumental in winning for laborers the right to vote in parliamentary elections. Its fatal mistake was to organize a major strike which completely failed. The present National Union of Agricultural Workers, formed in 1906, has made considerable progress and is now an influential body, though it is still true only a minority of hired men are members.

An attempt was made, under the Corn Production Act of 1917, to introduce a system of guaranteed prices for grain and minimum wage rates for hired men, but the law was repealed in 1922. The present system of regulating wages was established for England and Wales in 1924, and Scotland followed several years later with parallel legislation. There is a central Agricultural Wages Board for England and Wales and an Agricultural Wages Committee in each county. Each of these committees is composed of equal numbers of employers' and workers' representatives, with an uneven number, usually three, of independent members. It is instructed to fix minimum rates of pay, weekly hours of work, overtime rates, etc., for adult men, young workers according to age, and women workers. It sets money values upon the various allowances in kind that may form part of the wage, and it makes rules regarding holidays with pay. In considering its problem it is expected to consider the income necessary to provide an adequate standard of living for the worker's family, and to take note both of the wage rates prevailing in other local industries and of the capacity of the farmer to pay.

The minimum rates fixed for adult males, in the years immediately preceding

World War II, varied in the different counties from 32 to 38 shillings for a working week of about fifty hours. These minima, with the considerable overtime earnings of stockmen and the payment of above-minimum rates to individuals, are supposed to have implied an average income to the adult male of nearly forty shillings a week.

The Central Board formerly had power only to refer back to a county committee, for reconsideration, any recommendation which seemed to the Board to be ill advised. More recently the Central Board has been given an overriding power in relation to the county committees, and it also lays down national minima, below which no county committee can set its rates. The British farm worker, like other wage earners, is under compulsory schemes for health and unemployment insurance.

Perhaps naturally, the chief complaint of the British farmer in the thirties was that, while he was required to pay a fair rent and a fair wage, he had no guarantee of a fair price. At the time of writing, prices were, of course, subject to wartime regulation, and it seemed that some plan of guaranteed prices might be continued after the peace.

Looking back at rural Britain over the centuries, it is easy to point to periods of what, by present standards, was gross social injustice. There have been times when a grasping or vicious landowner could grievously oppress his tenant, and times when a flourishing tenant could drive in a carriage and have a butler to serve his wine, while his hired man was not able to buy bread. Up till a hundred years ago the "landed interest" (which meant the landowners rather than the other two partners in agriculture) had too much say in the affairs of the nation. Fifty years later, the land and the men who owned and labored it were suffering from undeserved neglect. Farms that have been won from bog or forest with much sweat have foolishly been allowed to go back to bog and forest again. Many a hardy yeoman has lost his land through no fault of his own and many a skilled and diligent hired man has died a pauper. At times the land has produced well-nourished livestock and sadly ill-nourished children.

Perhaps the broad lesson to be drawn is that, while farming is a business that must aim at efficiency in food production, the land and its people are assets too precious to be left to the accidents of history or trusted to the uncontrolled power of individual men.

C. P. J. MOONEY OF THE MEMPHIS *COMMERCIAL APPEAL*,
CRUSADER FOR DIVERSIFICATION¹

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It has been generally conceded that the name of C. P. J. Mooney should be placed high among the newspaper immortals of the South since the Civil War and that the *Memphis Commercial Appeal* was the lengthened shadow of its great managing editor during the years from 1908 to 1926.

Charles Patrick Joseph Mooney was born in 1865 at Bardstown Junction, Kentucky. At the age of thirteen he began to contribute to his family's failing income by becoming a telegraph operator. Later, three years of college and two of school teaching preceded his removal to Pine Bluff, Arkansas, where he found employment on the *Press Eagle*. Here he reported news, solicited advertisements, wrote editorials, and introduced distinguished visitors, among them Henry Watterson. In 1890, he moved again, this time to Memphis where he became managing editor of the *Commercial Appeal* in 1896. Six years later, Mooney left for New York City to join, after three months on the *Daily News*, the Hearst forces as a member of the editorial staff of the *American*. In this capacity he wrote editorials favoring Parker's presidential candidacy and others assailing the Standard Oil Trust. From 1905 to 1908, he served as managing editor of the *Chicago Herald-Examiner*.

Railroad officials tell of a prophetic incident. Mooney, according to the story, was standing with an Illinois Central executive on an overhead bridge in Chicago one night in 1908. "A train passed under the bridge.

'What's in that train?' Mr. Mooney asked.

'Hams from Iowa hogs,' was the reply.

'Where are they going?'

'They are going to Southern markets.'

For a little while Mr. Mooney was silent. Another train passed under the bridge.

'What's in those cars and where are they going?' he asked.

'Corn, and it's going to the South to feed Southern stock,' came the reply.

'Well,' drawled Mr. Mooney, 'I think I'll go South, too, and teach the folks how . . . to raise food.'"²

Mooney became managing editor of the *Commercial Appeal* for the second time in 1908 and for the next eighteen years devoted his tireless energy (someone described him as "a steam engine in breeches") to the development of his paper and his section, the tri-states area dominated by Memphis. His vigorous denun-

¹This paper was presented at the session on Newspapers as a Factor in Southern Development of the Southern Historical Association at Atlanta, Georgia, on Nov. 6, 1941.

²Jack Carley, "Mooney Prophet of New South," *Commercial Appeal*, Nov. 27, 1938. See also *ibid.*, Nov. 23, 1926.

ciation of the trusts and the evils of monopoly, begun in the Taft-Bryan campaign, continued throughout his editorship. Just before his death, he regretted that the "Senate has become complacent to Privilege,"³ and that "Men controlling money are organizing America for their sole benefit."⁴ He was a fearless crusader for reform in local politics, for better educational opportunities, and for the enforcement of law.⁵ In 1912, he served as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention and became an ardent admirer of Woodrow Wilson. In November of the same year he wrote: "With the English navy destroyed, the United States could maintain the Monroe Doctrine only by having on the high seas ship for ship and gun for gun with Germany."⁶

He campaigned vigorously for the League of Nations, and for the World Court when the League's case seemed helpless. To the isolationists of that period he said, "Let a nation live for itself alone, by itself alone, regardless and oblivious of the other nations, and finally that nation will perish."⁷ In 1923, Mooney received the Pulitzer Prize for his famous editorial against the Ku Klux Klan, his contention being simply that there "can be no partnership between law and lawlessness."⁸

Mooney, himself a Catholic, was a staunch fundamentalist who denied the possibility of conflict between science and religion and a moralist who protested against the evils of liquor, dog racing, and gambling. On one occasion he wondered whether the shortening of women's dresses from the top and bottom would eliminate the necessity for material. He ridiculed the Ford presidential boom in 1923, contending that the motor magnate had no more qualifications for the high office than celebrities such as Babe Ruth, Jack Dempsey, and Charlie Chaplin, the last of whom he termed "the greatest genius that ever fell into an ash barrel."⁹ Once Mooney prophesied incorrectly: "Mr. Ford has not settled down in the business of giving away his fortune yet, but after a while he will."¹⁰ At that, the editor may have anticipated the National Labor Relations Board and the Congress of Industrial Organizations.

Because of the obvious impossibility of doing justice to the many-sided career of C. P. J. Mooney in short space, this article will sketch only his work concerned with the improvement of agriculture in the cotton South. It is by no means contended that Editor Mooney was among the very first to preach diversification nor that his was a voice crying alone in the wilderness. Certainly there were diversification efforts in colonial Virginia, and as early as 1827 the *Georgia Courier* decried the fact "that we have cultivated cotton, cotton, cotton, and

³*Ibid.*, Feb. 28, 1926.

⁴*Ibid.*, Aug. 1, 1926.

⁵In his famous Ku Klux Klan editorial, Mooney wrote: "A man's allegiance to nothing in America . . . is superior to his allegiance to the Constitution of the Republic."—*ibid.*, Sept. 23, 1923.

⁶*Ibid.*, Dec. 13, 1912.

⁷*Ibid.*, July 8, 1923.

⁸*Ibid.*, Jan. 15, 1926.

⁹*Ibid.*, June 3, 1923.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, May 6, 1923.

bought everything else. . . ."¹¹ Thomas Pleasants used some of the same arguments later found in the *Commercial Appeal* in his plea for diversification in reconstruction days.¹² Ever since then, intelligent men of the South have discussed the subject, although "there has been more discussion than diversification."¹³

The greatest name in the history of diversification is unquestionably that of Seaman A. Knapp.¹⁴ He paved the way for the passage of the Hatch Act in 1887, and more than anyone else was responsible for the establishment in the Gulf States of demonstration farms which were to prove the advantages of diversification. By 1908, there were 12,000 demonstration farms and 20,000 "cooperating" farmers in the South.¹⁵ "This work shows," Knapp said, "that there is no necessity for the general deterioration of farms and the too common poverty of the rural masses."¹⁶ "Buy nothing that can be raised on the farm"¹⁷ was the slogan of the converts to diversification who pointed out that the one-crop system is dependent on crop and market conditions, does not maintain soil fertility, has no place for the profitable raising of livestock, makes impossible an adequate system of farm management, brings a return for labor only once a year, and is partially responsible for limited knowledge, narrow citizenship, and lack of interest in homebuilding.¹⁸

Mooney was forcibly impressed with the work of Knapp, who, he claimed in 1910, "has done more for the Southern people than any other one individual in the last five years."¹⁹ The *Commercial Appeal* played up as front-page news the visit and speech of "the soil doctor," just a year before his death in 1911.²⁰ The editor himself was dependent on Knapp for much of his information, and he was always anxious to give credit where it was due.

¹¹Ulrich B. Phillips, ed., *Plantation and Frontier Documents: 1649-1863*, 1:289-290 (Cleveland, 1909).

¹²Thomas S. Pleasants, "Diversity in Agricultural Productions," U. S. Commissioner of Agriculture, *Report*, 1867, p. 247-253.

¹³B. I. Wiley, "Salient Changes in Southern Agriculture since the Civil War," *Agricultural History*, 13:68 (April 1939). As one example, Major E. G. Wall, Mississippi commissioner of immigration and agriculture in the 1880s, continually advocated more attention to wheat, jute, truck, fruit, cattle, and hogs. See E. G. Wall, ed., *Handbook of the State of Mississippi* (Jackson, 1882).

¹⁴Alfred Charles True, "A History of Agricultural Extension Work in the United States, 1785-1923," U. S. Department of Agriculture, *Miscellaneous Publication 15* (Washington, 1923).

¹⁵S. A. Knapp, "Demonstration Work in Cooperation with Southern Farmers," U. S. Department of Agriculture, *Farmers' Bulletin 319* (Washington, Apr. 6, 1908).

¹⁶S. A. Knapp, "The Farmers' Cooperative Demonstration Work," U. S. Department of Agriculture, *Yearbook*, 1909, p. 153-160.

¹⁷D. A. Brodie, "Diversified Farming in the Cotton Belt; 3, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Northeastern Texas," U. S. Department of Agriculture, *Yearbook*, 1905, p. 212.

¹⁸Bradford Knapp, "Diversified Agriculture and the Relation of the Banker to the Farmer," U. S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Secretary, *Circular 60* (Washington, 1915).

¹⁹*Commercial Appeal*, Jan. 6, 1910.

²⁰*Ibid.*, Jan. 20, 1910.

Besides the Department of Agriculture and the land-grant colleges there were many agencies and individuals trying to convince Southern farmers of the necessity of producing their own food and feed, and of increasing the fertility of Southern soils. The files of the *Country Gentleman*, the *Progressive Farmer*, the *Manufacturers Record*, and the reports of the commissioners of agriculture of the Southern States are filled with pleas for diversification. The Illinois Central occasionally sent demonstration trains into the Mississippi Delta,²¹ and the International Harvester Company did much educational work through experimentation and the issuance of pamphlets with such titles as "Diversified Farming in the Cotton Belt."²² The corporations undoubtedly were inspired by self-interest, but it was intelligent and enlightened.

In this crusade to convince millions of people of the necessity of a program, there could be no more influential medium than a large daily newspaper devoted to the cause. Not only must farmers be converted, but bankers and merchants must wax enthusiastic over changing the basis of credit to that of safe farming and providing local markets. It was in such a campaign that the influence of C. P. J. Mooney was emphatically felt.

From 1908 until his death, Mooney never deviated, except in detail, from his main purpose of establishing in the South a well-rounded agricultural economy which would not be entirely dependent on cotton.²³ Diversification to him became a gospel. "We are going to keep up this line of preaching until the fight is won,"²⁴ he contended in 1910, and for a decade and a half his crusading zeal gave credence to his declaration. Year in and year out, his conspicuously-boxed editorials unfailingly called attention to the fact that the continuation of a one-crop economy meant poor soil, small crops, the credit system, unevenly distributed work, more likelihood of injury from insects and plant disease, dependence on other sections for farm products, scarce money and high interest rates, and bad roads—in fact, poor people living in uncomfortable homes on poorly equipped farms. "People grow cotton and other things and make a decent living," he proclaimed. "People cannot grow cotton alone and make any sort of certain living."²⁵

For years, before advice-to-the-lovelorn and how-to-keep-well columns became the most widely read parts of morning newspapers, the *Commercial Appeal* featured a section dedicated to helping the farmer. Often the same bit of timely advice was continued for as long as two weeks, always at the top of the editorial page, and headed: "Farmers, attention!" Here Mooney passed on to those who would read the helpful bits of information he had picked up from practical farmers and experts in the Department of Agriculture and the experiment stations.

²¹See J. F. Merry, *The Awakened South* (Louisiana State University, *Bulletin*, Baton Rouge, March 1911); *Commercial Appeal*, Apr. 10, 1910.

²²George H. Alford, *Diversified Farming in the Cotton Belt* (Chicago, 1914).

²³Mooney wrote in 1926: "No other crop is more savagely battered around than cotton, and much of the slugging comes from home."—*Commercial Appeal*, Sept. 26, 1926.

²⁴*Ibid.*, Jan. 6, 1910.

²⁵*Ibid.*, Sept. 4, 1926.

Mooney called upon the farmers to adopt this New Year's resolution in 1910:

That we will estimate what we need of corn and hay and will devote ample land to these crops, selecting for corn our best drained land, so it can be planted early.

That for 1910 we will provide for our families a good garden, plenty of milk and butter and will grow enough hogs to make our meat.

That in planting and cultivating our crops we will first raise the things needed on our farms and then grow as much cotton as we can for the money crop, but cotton shall no longer be first in our affections.²⁶

A few excerpts taken at random from the "Farmers, attention!" columns will illustrate the ideas Mooney was trying to drive home:

We have made the farmers North and West rich by buying from them since the Civil War. Can we stand the drain of paying to the Northern farmer, to the dealer who buys from him, to the railroads and to our own merchants?²⁷

Begin to grow hogs this summer, because within a year or two there will be a packing house in Memphis, and you will have a local market.²⁸

If you are spending your time loafing around the country store, sitting around the stove whittling sticks and talking politics, then this is a waste of time.²⁹

Did you ever hear that the Northern farmer could live on what the Southern farmer wastes?³⁰

The heavy rains last week made several new gullies on the hillsides. If you do not close these several gullies in a few years they will be big enough to hide a house.³¹

It is a fact that if the railroad stopped running, we would have no ice cream in 48 hours. The ice cream manufacturers in Memphis have to import much of their milk. It is a fact that buttermilk at certain seasons of the year is shipped from Chicago and sold here over the counter at five and ten cents a glass.³²

Editor Mooney never gave up hammering away at the idea that the South must produce its food and feed. "There is wealth in the grasp of the Southern farmer that will be equivalent to the stock of gold coin in the United States," he said, "but he will only be able to secure it by going into the work of producing from the soil in addition to cotton, *something that can be eaten by man or beast*."³³ The whole country about Memphis would be greatly benefited if trade from the North in corn, hay, hogs, and mules were stopped. "Mississippi can and ought to be a SPRING GARDEN FOR THE UNITED STATES. Much of Mississippi ought to be a great cattle country."³⁴ "Ten acres of good land, well handled, can produce enough in these parts in one spring and summer to feed fifty people for three months. Think it over."³⁵

Besides the obvious advantages of a live-at-home program, he emphasized

²⁶*Ibid.*, Jan. 1, 1910.

²⁷*Ibid.*, Mar. 6, 1910.

²⁸*Ibid.*, Jan. 20, 1910.

²⁹*Ibid.*, Jan. 7, 1910.

³⁰*Ibid.*, Jan. 2, 1910.

³¹*Ibid.*, Oct. 10, 1910.

³²*Ibid.*, Mar. 16, 1910.

³³*Ibid.*, Feb. 6, 1910.

³⁴*Ibid.*, Aug. 12, 1923.

³⁵*Ibid.*, Mar. 14, 1926.

the fallacy of putting all of one's eggs into a single basket. "Our people in the country ought to know by this time that they cannot depend on cotton alone."³⁶ "The difference between the Northern farmer and the Southern farmer is that the Northern farmer has about five chances to win as against the Southern farmer's one chance. . . . The Southern farmer makes one cast of the dice on cotton. He sticks everything on this plant. If the crop is a failure—well, you know what happens as well as we do. If the crop is a bumper one the planter is in danger of having the market hammered down."³⁷ In 1925, he pointed out that "This spring our people did start in on one crop and for a little while they laughed at us, because the stand of cotton was fine. But the rain came and after the rain came the boll weevil. After the boll weevil came the army worm." Cotton prices were high, but "what difference does it make to a cotton grower how high the cotton is if he hasn't got any?"³⁸ In an editorial entitled "Hopes and Credit vs. CREAM, HOGS, AND 'AIGS'," Mooney said that "no one could expect all the great alluvial land planters to turn at once to pulling cow teats, setting hens and calling hogs for a living, but a small operator might do it," and the planter should at least raise his feed and food. "He would do a fine thing if he traded his \$7000 high-powered 'Lalapaloosa' for a jackass and some brood mares. . . . The boll weevil cannot eat up his cowpeas, his oats and his hay. If he makes a good effort he can grow a jag of corn."³⁹

A favorite theme of his was the security that only the soil can furnish. "Men still eat. What men eat comes from the soil. Soil decently treated is constant in its yield. The soil's real value can never be destroyed. . . . Own land. Own it free from debt. Then you will be as free as people can be free."⁴⁰

Mooney ever recognized the need for keeping intelligent youth on the farm. "We must have brains," he wrote, "behind the hands that grab the hen who has lost the instinct of motherhood."⁴¹ He wholeheartedly supported Knapp's program to organize boys' corn clubs, and as early as 1908 called for an agricultural high school in every county and at least one experiment farm in every State in the South.⁴² According to Mooney, "We want to take the boy from the plough after he has his primary education and put him in the agricultural college, then have him go back to the field richer in equipment. . . . We can develop this southern country of ours into a region splendid to live in, but this development can come about only by combined and well-directed intelligence."⁴³ Every State should make larger appropriations for geology departments.⁴⁴

³⁶*Ibid.*, Sept. 24, 1926.

³⁷*Ibid.*, Mar. 16, 1910.

³⁸*Ibid.*, Nov. 25, 1923.

³⁹*Ibid.*, Dec. 9, 1923.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, Apr. 4, 1926.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, Apr. 7, 1910.

⁴²*Ibid.*, Sept. 13, 1908.

⁴³*Ibid.*, Feb. 6, 1923.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, Mar. 14, 1926.

Mooney anticipated some of the work of the Mellon Institute and the National Cotton Council by calling for a well-staffed research laboratory "to find out new uses for cotton."⁴⁵

It may be of interest to scan the effects of the World War on Mooney's plans for diversification. In the fall of 1914 when cotton was selling at six cents a pound, the prevailing campaign called for those who could afford it to "buy a bale" and keep it from the market.⁴⁶ Then came the years of golden prosperity with its accompanying wild expansion, in large part on credit. After the war, the bottom dropped out of the market, equities in newly-purchased land were liquidated, and agriculture entered its long depression period. During this cycle from adversity to anguish, Mooney consistently hammered away at his same old plea.

"The farmer," he wrote in September 1914, "is in a bad way, *because he is not self-sustaining*. He can become independent when he stops sending the profit from his cotton into Illinois, Iowa, and other states for meat, meal, and hay. . . . The way to become independent is to stop mortgaging, and in order to stop mortgaging one must diversify. . . . The curse of the entire South is buying from other parts of the country those things which we can produce at home."⁴⁷

Though his pleas went unheeded, he called on the farmers in 1918 to grow at least enough wheat to feed themselves. The situation corresponded to that of the present day, but Mooney added to the patriotic, national-defense appeal for food crops the thought that wheat at \$2.20 a bushel was more profitable than cotton at thirty cents a pound.⁴⁸ In terms of meat, meal, mules, flour, and hay, cotton was cheap at thirty cents. The Memphis territory, he predicted in the same editorial, "will and should be the greatest cattle and hog region in the United States."⁴⁹

By 1921 Mooney had to write of depression in the South, of homes without enough food, of accumulations swept away, and of crops not bringing the cost of production. But, he said, some farmers around Capleville had diversified. "They were cut pretty close in money matters, but their land was in good condition. They had cattle and hogs and early this year they had potatoes, and quite early they had corn, and this fall they had a bountiful general crop, and it will fetch a fair price. . . . If cotton is down they have other things to sell."⁵⁰ Every county in Tennessee, Arkansas, and Mississippi, he thought, could be self-sustaining. A bit of the I-told-you-so attitude crept into one editorial.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, Oct. 24, 1926.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, Sept. 9, 1914.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, Sept. 20, Oct. 22, 1914.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, Sept. 6, 1918. See also Bradford Knapp, "Safe Farming and What It Means for the South in 1918," U. S. Department of Agriculture, State Relations Service, *Document 82* (Washington, 1918).

⁴⁹*Commercial Appeal*, Sept. 23, 1918.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, Sept. 23, 1921.

Men who owned champion cattle at the fair had told him it was easy to raise them in this territory. "We knew this all the time, but people would not believe us because they thought we farmed only on paper."⁵¹

In July 1923, Mooney deprecated the slackening of interest in food crops. "Any country that depends upon one product constantly, invites disaster," he declared. "If our people will grow enough corn to feed their mules, and if they will grow also other things such as potatoes, cabbage, and beans along with a few hogs and cattle, they can ASSURE THEMSELVES OF THREE SQUARE MEALS A DAY 365 DAYS A YEAR. The money they get from their cotton will not be paid out for condensed milk, canned salmon, and the like."⁵²

By the middle 1920s, huge surpluses were responsible for agitation by many experts for some sort of Federal control. As early as 1914, Mooney had seen the necessity of acreage reduction, but he could not persuade himself, ten years later, that any national legislation would help the cotton man.⁵³ A few days before he died, he talked of voluntary contraction, but he also continued to emphasize the increased need for diversification.⁵⁴ In 1908, Mooney had written, after night riders had beaten a farmer who had sold his peanuts outside a pool: "It is a man's privilege to do what he pleases with his hands, to sell his labor where it pleases him and when it pleases him, and to sell the fruits of his toil for a greater or less price as he sees fit."⁵⁵ In this case such "cowardly and criminal" action offended his sense of respect for law, but when the agricultural situation became more acute, as in 1926, he saw the necessity for the organization of farmers.⁵⁶ "The cotton commerce channel has so much capacity," he said, "It is about to be overloaded. It is necessary to hold."⁵⁷ "The cotton situation must be solved by organization," which meant artificial control of production. "Two or three years losses in cotton would of itself reduce the acreage but this method is the economics of the savage."⁵⁸ Another decade would see the Federal Government stepping in to prevent the "economics of the savage."

Mooney was aware of the slow progress the South was making towards his ideal of diversification. Bradford Knapp, whose "safe farming" coincided with Mooney's program, has pointed out how few farmers knew, even in 1915, what diversification implied. One farmer said to him, "I want to diversify—to quit cotton. What crop shall I change to?" A planter abandoned sugar and put 500 acres into tomatoes.⁵⁹ Mooney thought that bankers and merchants were

⁵¹*Ibid.*, Sept. 29, 1921.

⁵²*Ibid.*, July 25, 1923.

⁵³*Ibid.*, May 23, 1926.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, Oct. 24, 1926.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, Nov. 7, 1908.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, Jan. 3, 1926.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, Oct. 31, 1926.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, Oct. 3, 1926.

⁵⁹Bradford Knapp, "Diversified Agriculture and the Relation of the Banker to the Farmer."

to a large degree responsible for the seeming inability of Southern farmers to try new ideas but that after the World War even business men were beginning to see the value of diversification.⁶⁰ The South, he contended, had long been a "land of orators, land of dreams and impractical people. . . . Then old man Knapp came along. Then old man Rockefeller got interested. Clarence Poe took a hand. . . . Tompkins had a number of successors. Walter Hines Page felt he had not accomplished much, but he was a philosopher. He did more than he realized."⁶¹ "Our progress is the progress of a frog jumping out of a well. Our people jump three feet, then fall back two, but if they keep on jumping they will finally get out."⁶²

It must be admitted that twenty years of continuous pressure for diversification were "without marked results"⁶³ generally in the South. Though some communities and individuals had been greatly benefited, the impetus of the farm demonstration programs, the World War, the boll weevil, and farm depression had evidently been short lived. At present it seems that the effects of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration and Farm Security programs will be more lasting.⁶⁴ What an editorial Mooney might have written in October 1941, had he lived to see his region supporting a great cattle industry, to the extent that Wisconsin and Minnesota, Ohio and Indiana, were sending to Memphis their "dairy queens" to compete for the American title in the National Dairy Show. The real monument to C. P. J. Mooney, however, may be found in the *Commercial Appeal's* Plant to Prosper Program, whose prophet he was, and whose participants now number over fifty thousand farmers engaged in just such "live-at-home" and diversification activities as Mooney had advocated during his editorship of the paper.

⁶⁰*Commercial Appeal*, May 23, 1926.

⁶¹*Ibid.*, May 30, 1926.

⁶²*Ibid.*, July 25, 1923.

⁶³T. J. Woofter, *Landlord and Tenant on the Cotton Plantation*, 47 (Works Progress Administration, Division of Social Research, *Research Monograph 5*, Washington, 1936).

⁶⁴Helen Slentz, "Recent Trends Towards Diversified Farming in South Cotton Areas," U. S. Department of Agriculture, Resettlement Administration, *Land Use Planning Publication 17* (Washington, 1937).

MOVING BACK FROM THE ATLANTIC SEABOARD

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The western country was not an unknown wilderness before the Revolution.¹ It was familiar territory to the Indian traders, some of whom had settled in various places, particularly the French settlements of southern Illinois, before the region had been closed to settlement by the Proclamation of 1763. The British Government did not intend its restrictions to be permanent, however, and various groups, both in the colonies and in England, prepared for the day when the West would be open for exploitation.²

The Revolution broke British restraints on western settlement. During and after the War, settlers streamed across the mountains, and one of the tasks of the Confederation was to provide some kind of land policy which would regulate this settlement. At first, large grants of land were made to companies and to favored individuals, thus imitating British practice during the early settlement of the colonies. State and national debts, the claims of soldiers, the pressure of speculators, and the disinclination of the Federal Government to bother with small sales, all played a part in the early formation of land policies. Apparently, it was thought that actual settlement would be carried out by groups or by large landholders. Only slowly did the realization come that settlement would be made by individuals of moderate means.³

The land policy which gradually evolved balanced the desires of the West against the fears of the East. The Western settler wanted cheap land in family-sized plots. Further, he wanted the land sales to be held in the West and the Eastern land speculator to be eliminated. If there was to be speculation, the Western settler was prepared to do it himself. To the East, cheap Western land meant loss of population, fewer taxpayers, and declining land values. Eastern speculators sought Western lands as investments for their surplus

¹ This paper was presented as part of the symposium on the "Agricultural Frontiers in the United States" at the session of the Agricultural History Society with the American Historical Association at Chicago on Dec. 29, 1941. For the other papers read at this session, see Russell H. Anderson, "Advancing across the Eastern Mississippi Valley," *Agricultural History*, 17:97-104 (April 1943); and Everett Dick, "Going beyond the Ninety-Fifth Meridian," *ibid.*, 105-112.

² The best article on the Westward movement remains Frederick Jackson Turner's "The Colonization of the West, 1820-1830," *American Historical Review*, 11:303-327 (January 1906). See also Clarence Walworth Alvord, *The Mississippi Valley in British Politics* (Cleveland, 1917), and "Virginia and the West: An Interpretation," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 3:19-38 (June 1916); Archibald Henderson, "Richard Henderson and the Occupation of Kentucky, 1775," *ibid.*, 1:341-363 (December 1914); Alfred P. James, "The First English-Speaking Trans-Appalachian Frontier," *ibid.*, 17:55-71 (June 1930); Robert E. Riegel, *America Moves West* (New York, 1930).

³ Benjamin Horace Hibbard, *A History of the Public Land Policies* (New York, 1924).

funds. Political power resided in the East. Nevertheless, the land laws were gradually changed to meet the needs of the West. The size of the tracts grew smaller; credit was granted and then withdrawn; the price of land was reduced; and finally, the Preemption and Homestead laws placed keystones in the land policy. Except for the abolition of the credit system, the changes were to the advantage of the West. The credit system recognized that if land was to be sold, it ought to be paid for out of the produce of the land, but the terms of credit were not liberal enough. It was unrealistic to expect farmers to pay for their transportation west, convert wilderness into productive farms, create some of the social necessities, and pay for their land, all in four years. The system broke down during the depression following the War of 1812 and was abandoned. A few years' experience with cash payments showed that the West needed something else, but instead of reviving a long-term credit system, land policy went to the other extreme and the land was given away.⁴

Settlement on the frontier was not a line of steady movement; rather, it assumed wavelike forms. In times of great danger, as in the War of 1812, the frontier receded. In some areas the Indian danger held up settlement, and migration had to wait until either the Indians had been removed or title to their land acquired. At times, economic difficulties slowed up settlement. Between 1800 and 1815, a time of economic stress, migration to the new regions fell off. The end of the War of 1812 brought into being the Great Migration, but this in turn came to a halt with the depression of 1819.⁵

Migration did not always follow lines of latitude. Sometimes, settlers from Virginia and Maryland went to Illinois or Indiana. Occasionally, New Englanders moved south. Sometimes, as in Kentucky and Tennessee, settlement leaped over intervening barriers and formed islands in the wilderness. After piercing the mountain dike, settlement swirled up and down the valleys before resuming the flow westward. The general direction of the movement was west, but inside the main tide of migration there were smaller ripples surging north and south.⁶

Getting to the West was a complicated and expensive affair. The migrants traveled in wagons, on horseback, or afoot over narrow, rocky, mountain roads to some point on a river flowing to the West. At the river rendezvous, frequently Pittsburgh or Wheeling, boats were bought, rented, or built, and the emigrants floated down to a point nearest their destination. Usually, they had a definite goal in mind. A husband, brother, son, or neighbor had spied out the land of milk and honey on a previous journey and had returned to guide

⁴ *Ibid.*, 31-98; George N. Fuller, "Settlement of Michigan Territory," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 2:25-55 (June 1915); Waldo F. Mitchell, "Indiana's Growth, 1812-1820," *Indiana Magazine of History*, 10:369-395 (December 1914); Riegel, *America Moves West*, 52, 201-203; Jacob Burnet, *Notes on the Early Settlement of the North-Western Territory*, 394-395, 450-454 (New York, 1847).

⁵ Turner, "Colonization of the West," 305-306; Riegel, *America Moves West*, 190-193; Mitchell, "Indiana's Growth, 1812-1820," 369, 371, 375.

⁶ Riegel, *America Moves West*, 8-9, 40, 198; Turner, "Colonization of the West," 311.

the travelers to their new homes. Perhaps he had worked for a time in the West and either owned or had marked out a piece of land. Then, he had come back, the family had sold or given away the possessions which could not be carried with it, and had joined the stream of settlers headed for the Western Territory.⁷

Usually settlers carried only the barest necessities with them on their westward trek, but when a plantation owner set out for Kentucky or Tennessee his possessions might fill several boats. For most travelers the journey to the West was an experience full of danger and discomfort which they remembered vividly all their lives. Nevertheless, many Americans were extensive travelers and to have lived in several States was not uncommon.⁸

Following the lead of early observers, four classes of frontier settlers are usually distinguished. First, there were the hunters or backwoodsmen. These truly rugged individualists lived and dressed much like the Indians. They depended more on hunting than on agriculture for a living, although they did raise some corn and pumpkins in a small clearing, and they had a few hogs and, perhaps, a cow. They were restless; like Daniel Boone, they felt the need for elbowroom and moved with the fringe of settlement. Then, there were the first settlers whose chief business was raising cattle, although they did some hunting and farming too. They sold out and moved on when the country became so settled that they could no longer keep their cattle in the woods. The third group consisted of enterprising, young persons, chiefly doctors, lawyers, storekeepers, mechanics, and farmers. They established more or less permanent homes and began the "fabric of Society." The last group was composed of old settlers, wealthy merchants, and rich, independent farmers. These four groups contained the elements which cleared the land, made it productive, moved its products to market, and helped to cement the individuals who were subduing the wilderness. In addition, there were the fur traders, the soldiers, and the criminal riffraff always to be found on a frontier.⁹

⁷ Mitchell, "Indiana's Growth, 1812-1820," 369-382; Daniel Drake, *Pioneer Life in Kentucky*, 6-11, 33 (Cincinnati, 1870); Tilly Buttrick, "Voyages, Travels and Discoveries (Boston, 1831)," in Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., *Early Western Travels, 1748-1846*, 8:56-57 (Cleveland, 1904); Fortescue Cuming, "Sketches of a Tour to the Western Country . . . (Pittsburgh, 1810)," in *ibid.*, 4:62 (Cleveland, 1904); John Woods, "Two Years' Residence in the Settlement on the English Prairie, in the Illinois Country, United States (London, 1822)," in *ibid.*, 10:310 (Cleveland, 1904); Burnet, *Notes on the Early Settlement of the North-Western Territory*, 32; Elias Pym Fordham, *Personal Narrative of Travels in Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky; and of a Residence in the Illinois Territory: 1817-1818*, edited by Frederic Austin Ogg, 59, 95 (Cleveland, 1906); Charles C. Bryce, "The Backwoodsman Era in Western Pennsylvania," in *Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine*, 24:23-25 (March 1941).

⁸ Bryce, "The Backwoodsman Era in Western Pennsylvania," 23-25; Bayrd Still, "The Westward Migration of a Planter Pioneer in 1796," *William and Mary College Quarterly Historical Magazine* (ser. 2), 21:318-343 (October 1941).

⁹ Turner, "The Colonization of the West," 315; Cuming, "Sketches of a Tour to the Western Country," 137; Fordham, *Personal Narrative*, 125-127, 168, 181; Estwick Evans,

The settler's first task was to put up a shelter and clear enough land to provide food for the coming winter. Clearing land was hard work. The underbrush and small trees were grubbed up, and trees up to 18 inches in diameter were chopped down, sometimes in windrows so that crops could be planted between the fallen timber. The big trees were girdled and left standing; it took many years for them to disappear and to get the stumps out. Logs of a proper size for the cabin or which could be easily split into rails or puncheons were saved, but the rest were rolled together and burned. Between the stumps and deadened trees the first crops, usually corn and a few vegetables, were planted. Getting the timber off the land was slow work; in exceptional cases, a man might cut, fence, and partially grub 20 acres in a year's time, if he worked hard. The prairies had no tree-cutting problem, but it took some time to get them into production. Prairie sod was tough and full of roots. It was difficult to turn over and not easy to cultivate. Corn planted on newly turned prairie soil had to be hoed, because the soil was too difficult to work with a plow.¹⁰

The settlers tried to place their cabins where there was good drainage and an abundant water supply. Since the emigrant was probably in a hurry to get in a corn crop for the coming winter, the first shelter might be a "half-faced camp." This temporary home had three sides of logs and a brush roof. The fourth side was left open to the campfire or covered with skins. As soon as possible, a log cabin was raised. This involved chopping logs into proper lengths, notching and smoothing them, and with the help of neighbors rolling the logs together and raising them into place. Most cabins were one-story high with a loft for the children's bedroom. The roof was made of clapboards held in place with poles; the sides were chinked with sticks and clay; and the flooring consisted of puncheons or dirt. In the Indian country cabins were built with portholes or erected inside a stockade, guarded by a blockhouse. The log cabin was difficult to keep clean. One traveler wrote of the dirty Ohio houses and the "Indiana and Illinois pigsties, in which men, women and children wallow in promiscuous filth."¹¹

The interior of a cabin was as rough as the exterior. Beds and tables were supported by sticks thrust into the cabin walls. Three-legged stools stood on the uneven puncheon floors, and together with wooden bowls, trays, and trenchers could be made by the farmer. Cooking utensils might consist of a large

"A Pedestrious Tour of Four Thousand Miles, Through the Western States and Territories, During the Winter and Spring of 1818 (Concord, N. H., 1819)," in Thwaites, *Early Western Travels*, 8:344.

¹⁰ Cuming, "Sketches of a Tour to the Western Country," 151-152; Woods, "Two Years' Residence," 209, 309; Drake, *Pioneer Life in Kentucky*, 21, 35-36, 45; William F. Vogel, "Home Life in Early Indiana," in *Indiana Magazine of History*, 10:19-20 (June, September 1914).

¹¹ Fordham, *Personal Narrative*, 216; Woods, "Two Years' Residence," 274-278; Cuming, "Sketches of a Tour to the Western Country," 34; Drake, *Pioneer Life in Kentucky*, 14-15, 26; Vogel, "Home Life in Early Indiana," 1-4; Burnet, *Notes on the Early Settlement of the North-Western Territory*, 109.

kettle, a long-handled frying pan, a wooden board, or even a hoe. If these were not available for cooking johnnycake, cornshucks or cabbage leaves might be used. Corn was the chief article of food; it could be eaten as roasting ears, hominy, corn-meal mush, or corn bread. Beans, pumpkins, fish, wild game, and domestic animals were available, but corn meal was the staple food. Rough, homemade clothing was fashioned from deerskins, furs, wool, flax, and the stalks of nettles.¹²

There were few buildings in the barnyard. Cart and wagon barns were scarce, and the cornerib was usually the only granary. Cattle and pigs were left in the open during the winter, although pigs might be shut up in a pen of rails for fattening. Gardens were badly kept, but contained most of the common vegetables.¹³

The ax was the most necessary tool which the pioneer possessed. The pioneer farmers literally chopped their way from the Appalachians to the Mississippi. Their swinging axes cleared the land, built the log cabins, furnished the interiors of the cabins, and fashioned the farm implements. It was a wooden world made habitable by the ax. Plows had cutting edges of iron, but the rest was of wood. Harrows, doubletrees, hames, pitchforks, rakes, spades, sleds, and wagons, all were made of wood. What could not be made from wood could usually be fashioned from other farm products. Rawhide or tanned leather was cut into harness, and cornshucks were braided into horse collars.¹⁴

Farm animals suffered from neglect. Pigs ran wild in the woods and had to be killed when marketed, since they could not be driven. Cows and horses lacked winter care. Nevertheless, livestock increased rapidly. Great herds of cattle were raised in Kentucky and sometimes were fattened on the immense grasslands in Ohio. Some of the Kentucky cattle were driven to Eastern markets, but Eastern competition and high transportation costs were factors weighing against this practice.¹⁵

Corn was usually the first crop to be planted. It provided food for man and beast and could be planted, cultivated, and harvested among the stumps of newly cleared land. The second year, wheat and oats might be planted, but corn remained the most important crop. Flax, hemp, and tobacco were cultivated on a small scale north of the Ohio, but rye, barley, and buckwheat were

¹² Drake, *Pioneer Life in Kentucky*, 20-21, 44-48; Vogel, "Home Life in Early Indiana," 6-17; Fordham, *Personal Narrative*, 181; Cumming, "Sketches of a Tour to the Western Country," 353; Woods, "Two Years' Residence," 299.

¹³ Fordham, *Personal Narrative*, 120; Woods, "Two Years' Residence," 209, 279-280, 336; Thomas Hulme, "A Journal Made During a Tour in the Western Countries of America: September 30, 1818-August 7, 1819," in Thwaites, *Early Western Travels*, 10:70-71.

¹⁴ Drake, *Pioneer Life in Kentucky*, 42-43; Vogel, "Home Life in Early Indiana," 21-23.

¹⁵ Vogel, "Home Life in Early Indiana," 20; Drake, *Pioneer Life in Kentucky*, 44; Cumming, "Sketches of a Tour to the Western Country," 228-229, 298; Woods, "Two Years' Residence," 281; Evans, "Pedestrious Tour," 194, 329-331; Hulme, "Journal," 46; Buttrick, "Voyages, Travels and Discoveries," 78.

found only occasionally. South of the Ohio corn, tobacco, and cotton were important crops.¹⁶

For the first few years after breaking, the ground was too tough for the harrow. Grain was sown broadcast by hand and then "brushed in." Corn was dropped in furrows and covered with a hoe. Between the corn rows beans, pumpkins, and melons were sometimes planted. The sickle and rake, and later the cradle scythe, were used in the harvesting of grain. Since hired labor was scarce on the frontier, the harvest period was a time of mutual aid, and like many other activities it was frequently accompanied by a frolic with plenty of whiskey and dancing to enliven the hard labor.¹⁷

One of the great difficulties in settling the new country was the high rate of illness. The mosquito and accompanying malaria were the "Scourges of our new Settlements in the Western Country." One traveler thought that the mosquitoes of the West were not as bad as those east of the mountains, but most people would have agreed with the redoubtable Estwick Evans that "The musketoes near the Mississippi are very large, and not at all ceremonious." Other illnesses brought suffering too, but it was probably malaria that caused the greatest trouble.¹⁸

In spite of illness and hard work, frontier life was not all drabness. Frolics helped to lighten such tasks as husking, quilting, sheep shearing, apple paring, sugar boiling, and even hog killing. There were shooting matches, foot races, pole vaulting, goose pulling, wrestling matches, and drinking bouts. Dancing, kissing and marching games, and sleigh rides seemed to amuse some, and spelling schools were considered good fun by many of the early settlers.¹⁹

Goods imported into the western regions came from several sources. Salt, a prime necessity, could be secured from the licks in Kentucky, but much of it came from upper New York State by way of Pittsburgh, the great emporium of the West. Many settlers stopped at Pittsburgh to refit after crossing the mountains and continued to depend upon it for goods floated down the Ohio. Supplies from Baltimore were sent over the Cumberland Road, and Philadelphia goods came over the Forbes route. Some imports came from Virginia through Richmond. After the advent of the steamboat considerable quantities of imports

¹⁶ Woods, "Two Years' Residence," 293-298, 300-309; Cuming, "Sketches of a Tour to the Western Country," 103, 171, 298, 352; Fordham, *Personal Narrative*, 94, 118; Evans, "Pedestrious Tour," 268, 304; Vogel, "Home Life in Early Indiana," 22-24.

¹⁷ Woods, "Two Years' Residence," 202-203, 248, 300, 309; Cuming, "Sketches of a Tour to the Western Country," 197; Vogel, "Home Life in Early Indiana," 22-23.

¹⁸ Cuming, "Sketches of a Tour to the Western Country," 119-120; Woods, "Two Years' Residence," 252, 342; Evans, "Pedestrious Tour," 305; Fordham, *Personal Narrative*, 200, 230; Fuller, "Settlement of Michigan Territory," 26-27; Daniel Drake, *Natural and Statistical View or Picture of Cincinnati and the Miami Country, with an Appendix, Containing Observations on the Late Earthquakes, the Aurora Borealis, and South-West Wind*, 27 (Cincinnati, 1815).

¹⁹ Vogel, "Home Life in Early Indiana," 305, 308-315.

were shipped north from New Orleans. However, transportation costs were high, and until the coming of the canals and railroads imported goods were expensive in the West.²⁰

As soon as a surplus was created in the West, a search for markets began. Five were available. Troops which garrisoned the West consumed some produce, but were never numerous, except during the War of 1812. The mass of settlers moving west provided an important market, but in time added to the surplus. Old or new towns took some of the products of the West. Detroit, for example, was supplied with foodstuffs by the farmers of upper New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, but the Western surplus outran such demands. Some products, such as cattle, could be taken to the Eastern markets, but the transportation cost was high. Until the coming of the canals and railroads New Orleans was the big market for Western produce. Large quantities of flour, pork, beef, venison, whiskey, flax, lumber, and livestock were shipped there for Southern consumption, ships' stores, or foreign markets.²¹

This problem of marketing the surplus was the most insistent that the settlers had to face, and it explains the absorption of the West in internal improvements.²² The West was in debt to the East not only for the land, but also for the necessary commodities imported from the East. Payments had to be made somehow and in the end could only be made in Western produce. Payment could be made either directly to the East or in a roundabout way through New Orleans. Transportation costs were too high to permit the extensive shipment of Western produce eastward, and the Southern market was unsatisfactory. The key to the problem was cheap transportation in the form of roads, canals, or railroads. Successful settlement of the West depended upon cheap transportation, and the nineteenth century in American history could be called the Century of Internal Improvements.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 24-25; Cuming, "Sketches of a Tour to the Western Country," 248; Evans, "Pedestrious Tour," 269, 304, 339; Randolph C. Downes, "Trade in Frontier Ohio," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 16:473 (March 1930); George S. Cottman, "Early Commerce in Indiana," *Indiana Magazine of History*, 4:1-7 (March 1908).

²¹ Evans, "Pedestrious Tour," 195, 269, 326, 339-342; Cuming, "Sketches of a Tour to the Western Country," 352; Burnet, *Notes on the Early Settlement of the North-Western Territory*, 397; Downes, "Trade in Frontier Ohio," 471-480.

²² Burnet, *Notes on the Early Settlement of the North-Western Territory*, 397; Downes, "Trade in Frontier Ohio," 490-494; Mitchell, "Indiana's Growth, 1812-1820," 369-378, 388-392.

ADVANCING ACROSS THE EASTERN MISSISSIPPI VALLEY

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When did the movement of population back from the Atlantic coast become something different—when did it cease to be a part of the seaboard development and become part of the Mississippi Valley story?¹ In general, it changed the moment the settlers, to whom the long, weary miles over the mountains in wagons had demonstrated the difficulties of transporting produce to their old accustomed markets, began to look downstream rather than back over the mountains. In another sense, and for convenience's sake it is used here, the West became the West when the Nation, after the close of the War of 1812, turned its face away from the Old World and devoted its energies to developing its own resources—when it gave up some of the nostalgic affection for the old and sought to create its own.

To put the story of the search for new lands in current language, the advance of settlers across the eastern Mississippi Valley may be likened to a military invasion. As early as 1790, the invaders had made reconnaissance contacts with that region and had established a bridgehead at Pittsburgh and another in eastern Tennessee. Perhaps it is straining the simile somewhat to speak of the Frankfort settlement in Kentucky or that of Nashville in Tennessee as having been settled by parachute troops, but they were outposts, well in advance of the main body, and without good or certain contacts with the older settlements. Elsewhere the invaders were held back by hostile Indians, inhospitable mountain regions, or too many miles of poor or missing roads. About two decades elapsed before there was much more than a consolidation of these early outposts and a notable expansion of the agricultural frontier beyond the mountains.

What is this agricultural frontier? As used here, it is that area in which an appreciable settlement has been made and which is still being thought of as a source of virgin land. It was preceded by a hunter's and trapper's frontier and was followed by a more settled agriculture in which the new "army" was established and "mopping up." The force of the push had gone on beyond the areas which were in this advanced stage.

Traditionally, the "frontier" has been regarded as the line bounding the area having a population of two per square mile and this may be taken as the lower limit of the frontier as here considered. A population of from two to eighteen per square mile probably represents from one to five families. With 40-acre

¹ This paper was presented as part of the symposium on the "Agricultural Frontiers in the United States" at the session of the Agricultural History Society with the American Historical Association at Chicago on Dec. 29, 1941. For the other papers read at this session, see Rodney C. Loehr, "Moving back from the Atlantic Seaboard," *Agricultural History*, 17:90-96 (April 1943); and Everett Dick, "Going beyond the Ninety-Fifth Meridian," *ibid.*, 105-112.

holdings such a population would occupy from 40 to 200 acres of each section. With two settlers per square mile there was land aplenty and the presence of these settlers advertised its good qualities rather than drove others away. Eighteen settlers per square mile might represent from 200 acres to all the land, although the latter case would be rare. When a swarm of settlers was moving across the country, the best lands, by the prevailing standards, were taken first, and an area where half the land was in the hands of settlers probably gave little effective competition to unsettled lands farther on, which had the psychological advantage of being unknown and, therefore, endowed with unusual qualities.

This agricultural frontier shifted and, furthermore, it was not merely the area in which a given few people lived. It was the land which attracted new settlers. By such a definition, areas which stayed too long in this population bracket because they lacked those qualities which attract newcomers are eliminated. If a country, under the conditions being considered, did not exceed a population of eighteen per square mile in thirty years, it had undoubtedly lost its lure even though much of it was unoccupied. Many of the areas, even outside the mountains, had not yet gone much beyond the limit of eighteen per square mile. In many of the areas which had exceeded that figure some of the farmers were pulling up stakes and moving on, seeking the end of the rainbow, while other less speculative souls took their places.

If mixing metaphors is permitted, this agricultural frontier may also be compared to a slender giant amoeba, moving slowly and jerkily sidewise across the country, reaching out as amoebas do, enveloping an area which might be digested or spewed out as unsuitable. It might move steadily across level prairie lands, shoot a projection out along a river valley or hesitate when facing a mountain range or a body of hostile Indians.

When the War of 1812 struck the West the advancing wave of settlement recoiled from the threat of Indian trouble. Settlers who had gone some distance into the Northwest Territory returned to the Ohio River or retired to the more settled country beyond. With no outlet either northwest or southeast the migration from the East filled in eastern and central Kentucky and Tennessee with little extension to new land.

When peace came and the frontier dangers were lessened the settlers swarmed out from the upland south and the Pittsburgh bridgehead. The line again moved northwestward, although by 1820 it had reached but little beyond that of 1810 in Ohio. This was due, in part, to the fact that the land had to be reoccupied, and, in part, to the prosaic but inflexible limit of the long, weary miles of poor roads to a commercial outlet on the Ohio River. The carriage had eaten the last grain in the measure. After all, why go halfway across Ohio and haul corn that distance back when good land could be had near the river further down in Indiana and Illinois? While the settlement in Ohio awaited the development of new transportation facilities which would open new frontiers, the tide of strictly new settlement drifted down the river.

Proximity to the water transportation of the Ohio River naturally resulted in

settlement along the southern border of Indiana despite the fact that it was the roughest, and generally speaking, the poorest part of the State. The settlers, even if they had known the qualities of the land in northern Indiana or Illinois, would have attached little virtue to the black lands there, two hundred miles away with no roads, and covered with a heavy prairie sod which defied their weak plows and teams.

The magic name in Indiana was, of course, Vincennes, and to that country the settlers turned, attracted by the glamour and actuality of a settlement, available river transportation, and land which was proven rich by the heavy growth of timber. Southern Illinois was receiving its old settlers who had fled before the Indian threat and enough newcomers to give at least the appearance of statehood requirements by 1818. They went up the rivers and skirted the prairies in the pattern so familiar in the Northwest Territory.

Even to those who prized woodland which had to be cleared, much of southern Illinois appeared to have little promise and never became a mecca for settlers although it gradually gained in population. It was not until 1850 that most of the road from Shawneetown to East St. Louis lay through an area having a population of eighteen per square mile. It might be added, by way of justification of the settlers, that a recent map giving the current corn yields in southern Illinois bears a striking resemblance to the population maps of 1820 to 1850.

Except for the settlers who stopped near Shawneetown, the Wabash region, and unique settlements such as that of the English under Flower and Birkbeck at Albion, most of the settlers drifted down the Ohio River and made their way up the Mississippi toward the settlement on both sides of the river near St. Louis. They passed by much rich, alluvial land, with which they were not prepared to cope. Being rich and well-watered, this land carried an enormous growth of timber, the clearing of which was a prodigious task. Furthermore, it was subject to periodic inundation which made naturally swampy regions worse. The settlers coming this way prized timberland as being productive and providing fuel and shelter, but this was too much of a good thing.

The thrust of settlement which was heading northward from New Orleans had not yet, in 1820, made settled contact with the Ohio country, the only connection being a river boat outlet southward. In the upland south, that area which had passed beyond the frontier stage spread to the southern line of Tennessee while the frontier area swept around the bend of the Tennessee River and down to its mouth on the Ohio, rather than westward across the river lines. To the southeast the Indian line on the Altamaha River held firm but an enveloping movement swept around the Indians—again along river lines, the Alabama and Tombigbee, leaving an area virtually unoccupied by whites in Florida, western Georgia, and eastern Alabama.

During the twenties, there were, generally speaking, no hindrances to western settlement, but there were several favorable factors of importance. The most spectacular of these was the Erie Canal. Built to further the trade of New York City, it did this and, at the same time, profoundly affected the agriculture of

both New York State and the West. Beginning with a weekly migration of 500 in 1825, the numbers going westward over the canal reached 3,000 weekly in the summer of 1829. There was no doubt in the minds of those going west about what caused them to move. They had seen each newly opened area swamp the older communities with enormous quantities of grain and force changes in their agriculture. The constant movement to the west created a vortex of excitement which induced farmers to leave even good land not far distant from the canal to join the trek to the next new land which would in turn overwhelm what they were leaving.

This new country was Ohio, where the pioneers found a combination of good land and low prices, reduced in 1820 from \$2 to \$1.25 per acre. By 1830, the frontier line in northern Ohio had gone but little beyond that of 1820 but a notable change had occurred. Whereas in 1820 the eastern half of the lake shore had from six to eighteen inhabitants and the western half (and portions of Michigan) was in the two to six bracket, by 1830 most of the Ohio lakeshore line had gone beyond the frontier. A large part of this rapid increase *now* occurred in the last five years of the decade and was traceable to the opening of the Erie Canal.

Another factor of some importance was the increasing use of steamboats on the western waters. In addition to the flatboat outlet down the river, the settler had the faster steam outlet and a relatively fast and economical means of bringing the goods of civilization up the river. The increasing immigration during the twenties and thereafter supplied people, many who came directly to the west. Some mixed with the general movement while others came in bodies or maintained a close union. Even those who stopped in the Eastern States helped swell the tide by tending to displace old residents who emigrated to the west. The increased demand for cotton, made possible by the more general use of the cotton gin, stimulated a demand for land in the South and furnished much of the pressure behind the movement of population into new lands there.

During the twenties, the line moved steadily northward in Indiana and Illinois. Following the sycamores of the Wabash and pushing east from that river, north from the Ohio, and west from the State of Ohio, the settlers blocked in the southern half of Indiana within the frontier limits despite its relatively poor soils. Settlers trickled into southern Illinois from the southeast but most of the advance into that State at this time came from the southwest, heading northeasterly up the Kaskaskia and Illinois rivers.

Despite the fact that the American Bottom had been settled for more than a century, this rich alluvial area lying east of the Mississippi near East St. Louis was not beyond the frontier stage at this time, and yet it is not proper to put it beyond the pale. Its slowness was not due to a lack of quality but to a number of circumstances, one of which was its settlement by the French. The French in Illinois were, indeed, a paradox. The French are generally thought of as trappers and traders who took little interest in making permanent settlements; the English are revered as homemakers with the concomitant references of a

settled agriculture and a related trade and industry. Yet in Illinois the French for all their supposed lack of feeling for real settlement and their near-medieval form of agricultural organization, established a more orderly agriculture than did their successors, the reputed English homemakers. In their own easygoing way they developed a more prosperous agriculture than was to be seen there for more than fifty years following the English occupation. At that time many of the French, fearing the unknown, left their communal fields and moved across to Spanish territory and the orderliness and even tenor of the agricultural community was broken.

The English who came were not the homemaking Englishmen of the eastern seaboard but a kind of adventurer who sought to exploit rather than to settle. It was not until the advance of what is termed "American" settlers across the Mississippi Valley that the traditional homemaking Anglo-Saxon appeared. They came, not as an organized and directed community, as had the French, but as individuals, each largely going his own way within the broad limits of circumstances. All this helps explain why the American Bottom was still in the frontier area in the 1820s.

In moving northeast through Illinois the heavier settlements followed the rivers while the fringe went up between the valleys. As suggested before, it was not always the alluvial land, with its heavy growth of trees interspersed with sloughs and subject to overflow, which received major attention. The rivers, particularly the Illinois, furnished transportation facilities and the upland timber supplied shelter and fuel and, together with the open oak clearings and the edge of the prairies, furnished the farm land. On this cleared land the first crop was usually corn, planted, in the case of the prairie land, in the upturned furrow slice. Soon followed the wheat crop which furnished a variation in the bread diet and also a cash crop which would bear the cost of transportation better than did corn.

About the early thirties, the fair land of Illinois was the Sangamon country, a general term for a wide area near the present Springfield. Of course, all of its commercial outlets were down the river, more often by flatboat after the manner of Abraham Lincoln's famous trip to New Orleans.

Across the Mississippi, the settlement in the new State of Missouri pushed slowly but steadily to the southwest and up the Missouri River to Kansas City, virtually to the ninety-fifth meridian. Here, to the familiar river pattern, was added a selection due to the question of slavery. Just as settlers coming down the Ohio had chosen between the free Northwest Territory and the slaveholding upland South, the settlers coming up the Mississippi from Cairo might turn to the right or left according to their views of and interests in the slavery question.

By 1830, the frontier line had pushed westward across Tennessee to the Mississippi River but had stopped short in the south at the Mississippi line where the Choctaw and Chickasaw Indians still remained. The quest for new lands to satisfy the growing demand for cotton, which the increasing use of the improved gin had made possible, was driving the adventurous planters-on-the-

make to the lower South with their slaves. Breaking across the Altamaha River when the Indian titles were extinguished, the settlement quickly surged across the central portion of Georgia to the new Creek frontier at the Alabama border. During the decade of the thirties, much of this new land went through and beyond the frontier classification. It is little wonder that it was so since the area was close at hand and the population had been piling up behind the Indian frontier for years while the demand for cotton became more pressing.

Having again come up sharp against the Indian wall the settlers turned southward around the Creek country and joined in the settlement of the black lands of Alabama. Here again, while the trend is westerly, the settlement moved in nearly every direction but chiefly north and south along the river lines. The alluvial lands along the Mississippi were, by 1830, beyond the frontier stage as far as Vicksburg while the frontier reached on either side, into the Mississippi uplands, up the Red River, and up the Mississippi to join the Ohio block, as well as through a maze among the valleys of Arkansas.

The agricultural frontier of 1830 defies simple description. The defined population limits extended from near the ninety-fifth meridian to southeastern New York and from Lake Huron to Apalachicola, the Red River or the Indian Territory, but some of this settled area was too old to meet the requirement of attractiveness to new settlers. The promised lands of the day were the western Lake Erie region (for the settlers coming over the Erie Canal), the Sangamon country in Illinois for the antislavery settlers coming up the Mississippi, and Missouri for the slave sympathizers coming over that route. They also included almost all of the Georgia-Alabama-Mississippi region where the Indians had been removed, with a preference for the black lands of Alabama and the areas near the Mississippi where there was adequate transportation at hand.

By 1840, the northern frontier line across Wisconsin and Michigan had assumed a peculiar shape—an almost straight line west from the tip of Lake Huron. The preceding ten years had seen a continuation of that remarkable influx over the Erie Canal. The settlers had, of course, followed Lake Erie and thence overland westward or around the loop through the Straits of Mackinac to western Michigan, Wisconsin, and northern Illinois. In Michigan, settlement had come to the timber areas, and most of the later northward expansion is traceable to timber. The agricultural frontier there had almost reached the ultimate limit. The subsequent history of northern Michigan after the long-handled ax had had its day, has been one of ragged settlements, impoverished farms in cutover lands, rezoning, and reforestation. In the succeeding two decades something of the same situation was to develop in Wisconsin with the line reaching roughly from the head of Green Bay westward.

The loop of the Great Lakes past Mackinac was a very useful outlet for that crop which the continuing swarm of settlers poured out over the Erie Canal, to overwhelm New York agriculture as the early emigrants had foreseen. It was, of course, some years after settlement before any wheat was sent eastward from these new areas. The first necessity of the settler was to provide for his own

food and feed. Then he turned to the task of supplying the same for his new neighbors. This took much of his surplus for the first few years. Up to 1835, Ohio was the only western wheat-exporting State along the Lakes. Eastern Michigan began shipment in 1836, western Michigan in 1838, Wisconsin in 1841, and Illinois, in quantity, in 1842.

The flood of immigrants coming into Illinois during this period came through the young city of Chicago and streamed southward, dovetailing with the settlements coming from the south and sometimes leading to misunderstanding between the Yankee and the Kentuckian. While streams were scattered throughout the State the proportion of timberland in the north was much less than in the southern portion, and the new settlers were soon forced to try the prairie with its tough sod.

The settlers from the north were, in general, better equipped with teams and heavy plows than their southern counterparts, and with characteristic ingenuity they doubled their teams and with heavy prairie breakers turned the sod and planted their first crops of sod corn with the aid of the ax. This rough method of planting and little if any cultivation resulted in a surprisingly good crop. However, the new settlers were in for a rude shock when they tried to plow the rotted sod and mellowed land with their wooden or cast-iron plows which had worked quite well in the east. It might well be maintained that the successful occupation of the northern portion of Illinois was made possible by the invention of the steel plow, an implement which would turn the mellow soil—which would “scour” as the farmers put it.

So great was the pressure for land that the tide of settlement went across the river lines by wagon and filled in the Fox and Rock River Valleys, and into the military reserve lands in the west-central portion of the State. With the exception of a small prairie area in the east-central portion, which was unsettled, and areas near Springfield, East St. Louis, and the Wabash which were beyond the frontier population bracket, the population ranged from two to eighteen throughout the State. It seems strange to include Illinois of 1840 in the same category with some of the areas previously described but with the exception of the areas mentioned and parts of southern Illinois it was attracting new settlement, and it had, withal its heavy gains, the requisite population per square mile. Its ability to absorb still further population increases is shown by the development which came in the fifties with the opening up of large areas to commercial agriculture by the building of the railroads.

In the South the decade of the thirties had seen the extinguishing of the Indian claims in Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi and the rapid settlement of their lands. If the county units are not broken down there were comparatively few areas in the South, east of the Mississippi River, which were not settled and no great proportion had gone beyond the frontier criteria. In general, it was a process of consolidating good lands into the plantation system and pushing the small farmer onto the less desirable lands. In most of the South then being settled the proportion of land not suitable or attractive for settlement was much

greater than was the case north of the Ohio River. That is evident by observation even today.

Missouri of 1840 was growing, and its settlement had been moulded to its western line. The spider web of settlement along the rivers of Arkansas had also reached its western border, while the Louisiana settlement was touching the "foreign" soil of Texas. In the period from the forties until the close of the Civil War, Texas must figure in two divisions of such a trilogy as this. One of the burning questions of the day was whether slavery should be allowed to march westward with the parallels. From the northern viewpoint, was it safe to allow it to do so on the assumption that it would reach its ultimate climatic limit? This point need not be argued on the basis of later development, but it is quite proper to regard the expansion of the cotton kingdom into Texas as part of the expansion of the lower South even though it goes beyond the ninety-fifth meridian—beyond the Mississippi Valley. By 1860, the line reached to the Red River, along the Indian Territory, and to the region of Austin and San Antonio. It was obviously a cotton and slavery expansion. The other Texas frontier, that of the cattleman, began before the Civil War, but it belongs properly to the story of the cattle empire in the West.

Until 1850, the western line of Missouri held, and further settlement expanded northward into Iowa. The river counties of that State had been settled by 1840, and the frontier line extended from Council Bluffs to Prairie du Chien in 1850. Here the pattern of settlement was the familiar river one up the Missouri River or the tributaries of the Mississippi. The fifties saw the steady push toward the northwest through the rich corn lands, with a heavy movement up the Mississippi into southeastern Minnesota.

By 1860, the only unsettled areas on the map of the United States east of the ninety-fifth meridian were northwestern Iowa, western and northern Minnesota (much of which was not adaptable to agriculture), northern Wisconsin, and Michigan (likewise beyond the potential agricultural frontier), the Adirondacks, northern Maine, southern Florida, and fringes of the Gulf coast. From 1861 to 1865, the energies of both the North and South were directed toward other fields—and the story from the close of that struggle belongs west of the ninety-fifth meridian.

GOING BEYOND THE NINETY-FIFTH MERIDIAN

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By 1850, the vanguard of agricultural settlement had reached the Missouri River.¹ The region beyond had long been designated on maps as "the Great American Desert." Zebulun M. Pike had reported that the immense prairies beyond the Missouri were "incapable of cultivation," and Stephen H. Long had said that they "bear a resemblance to the Desert of Siberia." As late as 1861, a United States Senator, in opposing the admission of Kansas, declared that "after we pass west of the Missouri River, except upon a few streams, there is no territory fit for settlement or habitation. It is unproductive. It is like a barren waste."² However, in spite of the gradual decrease in rainfall between the Missouri River and the Rocky Mountains, settlement pushed westward.

The passage of the Homestead Act in 1862 was a great stimulus to settlement. Shortly after the Civil War ended, a great flood inundated the plains region, rolling rapidly toward the Rocky Mountains until the panic of 1873 and the grasshopper plague stopped its flow in the middle seventies. Again in the early eighties, as a result of a few years of heavy rainfall, it swept onward almost to within sight of the Rockies. According to a Burlington railroad pamphlet of 1887, "The rain belt has moved westward to within less than eighty miles of Denver. . . . So much rain now falls in the eastern portion of Colorado that it is no longer fit for winter range for cattle. . . ."³

Thousands rushed into this alleged new rainbelt to secure homes. County governments were quickly organized, and lonely water tanks, once only railroad sentinels in an uninhabited waste, were soon surrounded by thriving little cities. After these years of abnormal rainfall, the agricultural mirage faded, and the human flood of migration receded. Towns were deserted, whole counties almost depopulated, and homes abandoned.⁴ The *Irrigation Age* remarked that "The

¹ This paper was presented as part of the symposium on the "Agricultural Frontiers in the United States" at the session of the Agricultural History Society with the American Historical Association at Chicago on Dec. 29, 1941. For the other papers read at this session, see: Rodney C. Loehr, "Moving Back from the Atlantic Seaboard," *Agricultural History*, 17:90-96 (April 1943); and Russell H. Anderson, "Advancing across the Eastern Mississippi Valley," *ibid.*, 97-104.

² John Lee Webster, "The West: Its Place in American History," Kansas State Historical Society, *Collections*, 12:26, 27 (Topeka, 1912). See also Everett Dick, *The Sod-House Frontier, 1854-1900*, p. 1-2 (New York, 1938); and Alfred B. Sears, "The Desert Threat in the Southern Great Plains," *Agricultural History*, 15:2-4 (January 1941).

³ Quoted in LeRoy R. Hafen, *Colorado: The Story of a Western Commonwealth*, 233 (Denver, 1933).

⁴ Francis G. Newlands, "Development of the West," 63 Congress, 2 Session (1913-14), *Senate Document 588*, p. 12.

history of Western Kansas and Nebraska is written in the tears of women and children. . . . There is no record of heroism more striking than the silent conflict of these deluded settlers with the immutable forces of nature."⁵

As the settlers of the late sixties looked beyond the ninety-fifth meridian, they saw a vast treeless prairie, except for the narrow fringes of woods along the streams. The first settlers soon cut these, and the homemaker faced a new situation: that of building a home and otherwise living without trees. Farther east, even in the Prairie States, the more heavily wooded streams largely served his needs. Now he had to make the prairie support him. His house was made of earth, either by building it of sod and covering it with dirt and grass or making a dugout by burrowing into the side of a hill and covering the excavation with the same material. In 1876, more than nine-tenths of the residents of eastern Nebraska had at one time or another lived in houses constructed of earth. Barns, hen houses, sheds, and even pigpens were made of sod. With no timber for rails, fencing was an outstanding problem. Often stock was picketed and even chickens and pigs were tethered on the prairie. Some sod fences were built, but the principal fence in the sixties and seventies was the hedge fence made of Osage-orange (*Maclura pomifera*) or black locust. Millions of these plants were bought from Illinois nurseries. It was the sharp thorn of the Osage-orange which gave an Illinois farmer the idea which developed into barbed wire in 1874 and revolutionized fencing on the plains in the eighties.⁶

The pioneer a little farther east had sufficient trees to give him certain foods, such as wild fruits, nuts, and honey. About the time of the Civil War, a Chinese cane called sorghum was introduced into the Prairie States. It was hoped that sugar could be made from this plant, but it has since been found that the plant contained glucose but no sugar. Nevertheless, it gave the prairie settlers almost their sole sweetening, sorghum molasses. Barrels of it were produced for home consumption.

Securing fuel was a more difficult problem. Buffalo and cow chips were the first fuel. When any member of the family walked across the prairie he carried a sack and kept a watchful eye for the coveted chips. Hay was universally burned. It was twisted by hand into hay "cats" and burned like sticks of wood. Machines were made for twisting hay, and hay-burning stoves were placed on the market. Cornstalks, sunflowers, and cobs, after the first crop, were burned. Even corn was burned in the eighties when the price went down to a few cents a bushel.⁷

Every effort was made to grow trees. Arbor Day was originated by these sun-parched prairie dwellers. Stiff fines were imposed for the destruction of shade trees. Land planted to trees was exempted from taxation. In Nebraska, through the efforts of its citizens, a large treeless tract in the Sand Hills was set apart as a national forest. The trees were to be secured and set out later. Strange to say, the plan actually worked.

⁵ *Irrigation Age* (Denver, Colo.), 4:225 (December 1892).

⁶ Dick, *Sod-House Frontier*, 81-82, 297-298.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 85-87, 255-260.

The frontier which had been present from the time the first settlers landed on the Atlantic seaboard was not always regular in its westward movement, nor was it constant in width. Like water running across a fairly level field, settlement sought the most favored spots. Pools of population appeared here and there, and streams of settlement followed navigable rivers and fertile valleys and then advanced inland, either westward or in some other direction. It was in these pools of settlement beyond the frontier line that irrigation farming first appeared. These isolated centers of population in the wilderness developed, not as a result of agricultural opportunities but almost in spite of the lack of them. The first irrigation by English-speaking people in America was undertaken in Utah where the Mormons had fled from border persecution. Within a week after they had arrived in the Salt Lake Valley in 1847, the Mormons had more than 50 acres plowed and had begun to dig ditches to water the land.

The next irrigation was in the vicinity of Denver, Colorado, where agriculture would never have started by itself. Little farming was done there the first year or two since everyone was too busy digging for gold. The high prices of foodstuffs soon tempted some to start agricultural pursuits. What was possibly the first garden in the vicinity of Denver was started at Golden in 1859 or 1860 by a man named Wall. Onions sold for 25 cents a pound and watermelons for \$2.50 each.⁸ In the spring of 1860, potatoes sold for \$16 a bushel. In Montana, in the sixties, flour hauled from Utah or freighted up the Missouri River sold for \$20 to \$50 a hundred. Ditches were being dug to lead water to be used in placer mining and soon men saw there was more money in using the water on the land to produce golden grain. By 1879, there were twenty grist mills in Montana, and the price of flour was only \$3 to \$4 a hundred.⁹ In 1866, nineteen years after the Mormons dug their first irrigation ditch, the 134,000 acres of cultivated land under irrigation in Utah produced crops with an estimated value of \$4,500,000.¹⁰

The earlier irrigation projects were small private concerns. A man gained possession of a plot of ground along a stream, and, taking his mining shovel, led the water out onto a low level spot. Sometimes a ditch was sloped properly by allowing the water to flow as the irrigator dug. Some used a pan of water as a crude level and sighted across its opposite edges. In time these amateur irrigators became expert at determining where water would, or would not, flow and could locate small ditches and laterals with great accuracy without the aid of any instruments whatever. The ditches of the fifties and sixties were virtually all laterals from the mountain streams and were dug by individuals. Before long the plow was introduced as a ditching tool.

By the seventies, the bottom land immediately adjoining the streams had been occupied, and the second bottoms were attracting settlers. Longer ditches

⁸ W. A. Helm, *Gate of the Mountain*, in the Bancroft Manuscripts, Colorado State Historical Society Library, Denver.

⁹ *Montana and the Northwest Territory*, 31 (Chicago, 1879).

¹⁰ Charles D. Poston, "Irrigation," U. S. Department of Agriculture, *Annual Report*, 1867, p. 195.

were then required and the increased expense made it impossible for each user of water to dig a ditch. Furthermore, the loss of water was greater from evaporation and soakage when a number of small ditches were used to carry the same volume that could be carried in a large one. This led to the formation of party lines, so to speak. The newcomer hooked onto the existing ditches, and helped to enlarge and keep them in repair. A good example is the Larimer and Weld Canal in Colorado which was built in 1864 by a single owner to water 800 acres. In the seventies, it was enlarged to water 40,000 acres and came to be a partnership affair where several hundred owned it. In other cases a group of settlers out away from a stream united and built a sort of community ditch at the outset. The colony of Greeley, Colorado, is a good example of this procedure.

As settlement advanced on the plains, the neighborhood ditches were insufficient, and in the eighties corporation projects became important. These were capable of supplying enough water to irrigate from 25,000 to 120,000 acres. An example is the Fort Lyon Canal built in 1884. It was 105 miles long and had an irrigation capacity of 120,000 acres. This is the water course which makes possible the production of the famous Rocky Ford melons.¹¹

The difficulties of the early irrigators were legion. A well-known characteristic of the American frontiersman was individualism. In fact, it is still so strongly entrenched that the plans for farmer cooperation offered by the Federal Government during the present administration have been received with indifference, if not hostility. In the early days of irrigation, as now, the farmers had inherited prejudices against submitting to the loss of freedom and giving others the control necessary to make cooperation a success. Furthermore, the farmers needed training in association. Many partnership ditches were begun without any definite understanding or written agreement as to what was to be each man's share in the project when it was finished, how much upkeep was expected of him, and how much water he was to receive.

There were no laws to control the organization and operation of ditch companies. The men who organized them were as much pioneers in the legal phases of irrigation as in the actual ditching. Enthusiasm or need drew men together to build ditches, but human selfishness, temporarily laid aside in time of a dire common need, soon asserted itself. Friction and disputes over the upkeep or the amount of water to which each was entitled resulted in disrupting tendencies. The man near the head of a ditch did not need to keep it in repair. As long as the water for the others ran past his place, they had to repair the ditch or do without. Then, too, an irrigator having this fortunate location often showed ingenuity in manipulating the head gate in such a way as to receive more than his share of the water while the neighbor down the ditch found himself doing more work and getting less water. In the words of Elwood Mead, pioneer irrigation expert: "Until farmers learned that they must place the control of their ditch in the hands of one individual, there was either murder or suicide in

¹¹ Hafen, *Colorado*, 227-229.

the heart of every member of the partnership."¹² Gradually laws emerged which gave permanency and stability to irrigation and titles.

As a method of farming, irrigation was generally accepted by 1873. Until this time irrigation farming had been to a large extent a corollary of other business as well as local in nature. For example, it had supplied the miners, whose business was gold hunting, with foodstuffs, and the ranchers had irrigated small plots to supplement stock raising. At the autumn of 1873, a definite effort was made to put irrigation farming on a firm basis. An irrigation congress held in Denver, the first such gathering in the United States, voted to ask the Federal Government to give the States one-half of the nonmineral land of the public domain within their borders to support a program of watering the semiarid lands.

This request was not without justification. Some of the rivers flow in deep valleys far below the level of the surrounding plains, and in order to water these higher plains which have by far the most arable land it was necessary to divert streams far up the valleys.¹³ Then, too, more capital was required than a settler or combination of settlers could command. It was the work of a nation rather than of individuals or corporations and awaited the Federal Government's aid.

There was a precedent for this in the Federal grant of \$150,000 for an irrigation canal in Arizona in the early sixties.¹⁴ In response to the recommendation of the First Irrigation Congress, President Grant, in his Congressional message of December 1873, recommended an irrigation canal from the Rocky Mountains to the Missouri River. This, it was suggested, would make a productive belt as wide as the supply of water could be spread and would connect the mining regions with the older States. All of the land watered would be clear gain, he argued.¹⁵ This project was in advance of its time. There was little hope of getting it through as there were still millions of acres within the rainbelt which had not been filed on by settlers.

It was not until June 17, 1902, a dozen years after the date set by Professor Frederick Jackson Turner as marking the end of the unclaimed land in the rainbelt and consequently the end of the frontier, that the first Reclamation Act was approved. The first Federal dam, the Roosevelt in Arizona, was dedicated on March 18, 1911.¹⁶ Since then many other large projects have been completed by the United States Government. They brought about artificial frontiers where the farmers pioneered under circumstances far different from the old days. According to the Department of Agriculture, two to three thousand dollars was required to get a start, that is, to make an initial payment on the land and purchase equipment to develop a farm on one of these projects.¹⁷

¹² Elwood Mead, *Irrigation Institutions*, 52 (New York, 1903).

¹³ The Grand Coulee project even envisages pumping the water from the reservoir up to the land to be irrigated.

¹⁴ Poston, "Irrigation," 193.

¹⁵ J. C. Smiley, *History of Colorado*, 1:574-575 (New York, 1913).

¹⁶ U. S. Bureau of Reclamation, *Federal Irrigation Projects*, 1-2 (Washington, 1926).

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 11.

As a result a reversal in policy took place. Originally irrigation followed settlement; now it preceded it. In contrast to the old preemption and earlier homestead days when the agent "did a land office business," the Federal Government had to campaign for settlers. The need to settle irrigated land at once was imperative, since a completed project represented a large investment on which interest charges had to be paid.¹⁸

The irrigation pioneer encountered a number of problems. He had to level the land before he could irrigate it. This was often overlooked by the prospective settler, who found this added expense facing him on his arrival. Sometimes it was greater than the cost of the water. The dead furrow was objectionable on this account and to overcome this a two-way sulky plow came into use. With this the farmer plowed across the field and back in the same furrow.¹⁹ The greatest mistake was in watering too much. In some places ponds and even swamps were formed. After a time minerals in the water or in the soil itself ruined some of the land.²⁰

After the disastrous retreat before the droughts of the eighties, settlers once more began warily and cautiously to venture out upon the forbidding high plains in the nineties. Here and there a few settlers too poor to get away or too stubborn to admit defeat had stayed on and succeeded. This settlement of the nineties was truly a frontier, although it postdated Professor Turner's "end of the frontier." It was made possible by the discovery of the new system variously known as dry farming, dry-land farming, or arid farming. This method consisted of plowing deep, seeding thin, keeping the soil compact, maintaining a surface layer of dry pulverized soil known as dust mulch, keeping the soil free from weeds and grass, and summer fallowing. The latter consisted of cultivating the soil diligently one year without a crop, maintaining a dust mulch all season, and growing a crop the next year. The dust mulch prevented evaporation of the moisture, and thus the precipitation of two years was conserved for one year's crop. Another part of the scheme was the breeding and growing of drought-resistant crops.²¹

In the late eighties, as a result of crop failures, some farmers in the region between the ninety-eighth meridian and the Rocky Mountains were beginning to seek more efficient methods of farming. Hardy W. Campbell was probably the most widely known leader in the work. He went from Vermont to South Dakota in 1879 and raised 12,000 bushels of wheat on 300 acres in 1882. The

¹⁸ Carl S. Scofield, "The Settlement of Irrigated Lands," U. S. Department of Agriculture, *Yearbook*, 1912, p. 483-484.

¹⁹ W. H. Olin, *American Irrigation Farming*, 79 (Chicago, 1913); Carl S. Scofield, "Federal Land Reclamation, A National Problem: Agriculture On Irrigated Lands," *Engineering News-Record*, 91:756-761 (Nov. 8, 1923).

²⁰ William E. Smythe, "A Plain Talk with My Readers: The High Destiny of the Arid Region . . .," *Irrigation Age*, 3:1-4 (Apr. 15, 1892); and "Irrigation Drainage," *ibid.*, 21.

²¹ William McDonald, *Dry-Farming: Its Principles and Practice*, 6 (New York, 1911); Kate Hammond Fogarty, *The Story of Montana*, 261 (New York, 1916); B. C. Buffum, quoted in *Dry Farming Congress Bulletin*, 3(4):300 (Spokane, Wash., Feb. 15, 1910).

next year he had a total failure. He then began to study soil and cultivation methods. In 1885, he invented a so-called subsurface packer which was widely sold as a dry-farming tool. His method of dry farming was called the Campbell system.²² It has since been discovered that the subsurface packer is not necessary. Dry farming as an auxiliary to irrigation had been practiced in California and Utah in a limited way as early as the sixties, but the first experiment stations for dry farming were not started until 1894.²³

In January 1907, the dry farmers met in convention for the first time. The meeting was scheduled as a side line to a livestock exhibit in Denver. To the surprise of all, this Trans-Missouri Dry Farming Congress had an attendance of three hundred and was one of the biggest features of the exhibit. It became an annual affair. The second session was held at Salt Lake City with an attendance of six hundred.²⁴ By 1910, when there was another scramble for land, far more dry-farming than irrigated acreage was under plow.²⁵

The problems of the dry farmer and the irrigation pioneer were similar in many ways. The man who moved from his boyhood home in the rainbelt to the region between the ninety-eighth meridian and the Rockies had to learn his business anew—in fact, to achieve the greatest success, he had to forget what he knew about farming and learn all over again.²⁶

Both irrigation and dry farmers had to face the problem of lack of timber for buildings and fuel. As settlement moved farther west this problem was partially solved by the use of sagebrush and cedar and pine from the breaks. Both had the difficult task of clearing the ground of sagebrush. For medium-sized sagebrush a railroad rail was bent, to keep it from rolling, and pulled across the frozen terrain by from four to twelve horses. This snapped the brush off clean at the ground.²⁷

Both the early-day irrigators and the dry farmers had trouble with the cattlemen who had previously used the land and felt that they had certain rights to the public domain by virtue of long occupancy. In time they supplemented their ranching in a small way with irrigation for hay, a garden, and a little small grain. Their wrath fell upon the dry farmers—the “Scissor-bills,” as they were called—for it was believed that they would spoil the country for ranching. The cattlemen threatened, then cut the dry farmers’ fences, deliberately drove cattle over the crops, and even resorted to violence, but to no avail. The great wave of settlement finally engulfed them.

Nevertheless, there were marked differences in the problems of the two kinds

²² H. W. Campbell, *Campbell's 1902 Soil Culture Manual*, 12-24 (Holdrege, Nebr., 1902).

²³ McDonald, *Dry-Farming*, 16-37.

²⁴ *Dry Farming Congress Bulletin*, 2(3):[2] (Denver, Apr. 15, 1909).

²⁵ For example, this was true of Utah. McDonald, *Dry-Farming*, 27.

²⁶ J. E. Payne, “Problems Confronting the Settler on the Plains,” *Irrigation Review*, 1:26-28 (September 1897); B. C. Buffum, *Arid Agriculture*, 15-16 (Worland, Wyo., 1909).

²⁷ Annie Pike Greenwood, *We Sagebrush Folks*, 29 (New York, 1934); *Irrigation Age* (Denver, Colo.), May-June 1892; Alva J. Noyes, *In the Land of Chinook*, 140 (Helena, Mont., 1917).

of pioneers. In irrigation farming the maximum returns are to be had on a small plot well tilled and irrigated. Ten to 20 acres will support a man. From 40 to 60 acres is all he can attend. The great majority bought from two to ten times as much land as they could use. Dry farming, on the other hand, tended toward larger holdings and the greater use of machinery. Allowing half of the farm to be idle in summer fallowing each year meant that the farmer must hold twice as much land as he would otherwise farm. The Federal Government recognized this and changed the size of a homestead from 160 acres to 320 acres. This was the smallest acreage that could be worked profitably.²⁸ The tractor and the combine first came into general use on the dry farms in the second decade of the twentieth century. In dry farming the drag harrow, the disc harrow, and the seeder were much used. Irrigation was sometimes spoken of as giving the land "a drink." On the other hand dry farming was spoken of as "horse leg irrigation," because the water was conserved by tillage.

²⁸ Buffum, *Arid Agriculture*, 36, 79-80.

FREDERICK JACKSON TURNER'S HISTORY OF THE GRIGNON
TRACT ON THE PORTAGE OF THE FOX AND WISCONSIN
RIVERS

FULMER MOOD

University of California, Berkeley

AND

EVERETT E. EDWARDS

United States Department of Agriculture

INTRODUCTION

In *The Early Writings of Frederick Jackson Turner*, mention is made of an essay in local history entitled "History of the 'Grignon Tract' on the Portage of the Fox and Wisconsin Rivers."¹ It was prepared by Turner during his junior year at the University of Wisconsin and published in the Portage, Wisconsin, *State Register*, for June 23, 1883. In the bibliography of Turner's writings, it forms the earliest item of a purely historical character.² Since files of the *State Register* are relatively inaccessible today, there are few historians of the present generation who have had the opportunity to become acquainted with this item.

Turner's interest in the subject of this undergraduate piece apparently stemmed from the work of about one thousand quarto pages entitled *The History of Columbia County, Wisconsin*, which was published by the Western Historical Company at Chicago in 1880. It is understood that this volume was largely written by Andrew Jackson Turner, father of the historian.³ The general history of "Claim 21" is found on pages 600 and 601 of this work. The account begins by quoting in full the patent to Grignon, dated April 26, 1832 and signed by President Andrew Jackson. It cites the record in the courthouse at Portage from which Frederick Jackson Turner was able afterward to secure the transfer records included in his essay. The county history further tells how Grignon procured the tract from the heirs of John Lecuyer and then goes on to give the history of the tract in clear outline; this the young writer followed in preparing his article.⁴ In the judgment of the late Dr. Joseph Schafer, superintendent of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, "The contribution F. J. Turner made toward completing the history of the tract was to set out the law according to which such early claims were judged (Annals of Congress, 17th Congress, 2d Session, p. 1342), recover the action taken on the Grignon

¹ Fulmer Mood, "Turner's Formative Period," *The Early Writings of Frederick Jackson Turner*, 14 (Madison, Wis., 1938).

² Everett E. Edwards, "Bibliography of the Writings of Frederick Jackson Turner," *ibid.*, 234.

³ Joseph Schafer, Madison, Wis., to Fulmer Mood, Nov. 20, 1939.

⁴ *Ibid.*

case by the commissioners (American State Papers. Public Lands, V. 5, 68 ff.), . . . combine the testimony of Grignon with the above, and transcribe the court house record."⁵

Essentially the piece is not an original production but partakes of the nature of a compilation. With a spirit of just and nice discrimination—and this is the observation of Dr. Schafer—young Turner recognized that this was so, for he inserted the phrase, "compiled by Fred J. Turner," beneath the title. Students of Turner who recall his use of "F. J. T." as the signature to notations he made on examination papers and on postal cards sent out as after-thought comments on seminar and other discussions will also be interested in noting the use of the familiar initials at the end of this article. It is, apparently, a very early instance of a procedure followed during his professional career.

In the present pages, sixty years after the initial publication, this modest essay is reprinted with a view to making it available to a larger audience because, no matter how elementary, the earliest works of men of genius will never lack for interest. The basis of the present text is a photostatic copy of the original newspaper article.⁶ Except the abridgements of the courthouse records on pages 118–119, the quotations have been checked with the sources and errors of punctuation and spelling eliminated.⁷

HISTORY OF THE "GRIGNON TRACT" ON THE PORTAGE OF THE FOX AND WISCONSIN RIVERS

Compiled by Fred J. Turner

The Grignon Claim, comprising a considerable portion of the land between the Fox and Wisconsin rivers where the city of Portage now stands, belonged to what is known as the sixth class of land claims, in the Territory of Michigan. This class was composed of occupancies and extinguishments of native right, by individuals since the country has appertained to the United States. As early as 1802, directions were given to the Indian Agent by the Secretary of War to investigate and report the titles of this country. Subsequent acts providing for commissioners to meet at Detroit to decide on land claims, were passed in 1807, 1812, 1820 and in 1823.⁸ The fifth section of the act of February 1823, entitled "An act to revive and continue in force certain acts for the adjustment of land claims in the Territory of Michigan," reads as follows (see *Annals of the Congress of the United States*, 17th Congress, 2d session, page 1343):

Sec. 5. *And be it further enacted*, That every person who, on the first day of July, one thousand eight hundred and twelve, was a resident of Green Bay, Prairie du Chien, or within

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Thanks are due to Dr. Schafer, who supplied the photostatic copy of the original printed text and gave generously of his counsel.

⁷ The senior editor is primarily responsible for the introduction and the junior editor for the verifications.

⁸ For a recent discussion of this subject, see Frederick N. Trowbridge, "Confirming Land Titles in Early Wisconsin," *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, 26: 314–322 (March 1943).—*Editors*.

the county of Michilimackinac, and who, on the said day, occupied and cultivated, or occupied a tract of land which had previously been cultivated by said occupant, lying within either of said settlements, and who has continued to submit to the authority of the United States, or to the legal representatives of every such person, shall be confirmed in the tract so occupied and cultivated; and the said commissioners, in adjudicating on claims to land embraced by this act, are authorized to take into their consideration the evidence and facts collected and reported to them by the agents of the United States, pursuant to the provisions of the act of the eleventh of May, one thousand eight hundred and twenty, as well as such other and further evidence and testimony as may or shall be exhibited before them by the claimants, to support their claims. And the register of the land office at Detroit is authorized and required to receive and record all notices and claims to lands provided for by this act, and which shall be exhibited to him on or before the first day of October next: *Provided, however,* That no person shall be confirmed in a greater quantity than six hundred and forty acres; nor shall any tract, so confirmed, exceed eighty arpents from front to rear. And it shall be the duty of the Surveyor General of the United States, under the direction of the Secretary of the Treasury, to cause the land confirmed by this act to be surveyed, at the expense of the claimants, respectively; plats of which shall be returned, as in other cases, and patents therefor shall be granted to the several claimants in the manner prescribed by law.

Among other claims submitted by Grignon under this law, we find the following (see *American State Papers—Public Lands—Volume V*, page 68):

Claim of Augustin Grignon.

I, Augustin Grignon, do hereby enter my claim to a certain tract or piece of land situated as follows, viz: commencing on Fox river one-fourth of a mile below the present landing place or portage; running thence to the Wisconsin one-fourth of a mile below the present landing place thereon; thence up the said Wisconsin three-fourths of a mile; thence to the pickets which surround the grave of the late John Ecuyer, deceased; thence to Fox river, one-fourth of a mile below the present landing; and thence to the place of beginning, supposed to contain about one section. As witness my hand, at Green Bay, this 18th day of September, 1823.

AUGUSTIN GRIGNON.

In presence of —

N. G. BEAN.

J. G. PORLIER.

TERRITORY OF MICHIGAN, *County of Brown, ss:*

Laurent Filly and Louis Bossirie, of the township of Green Bay, in the county and Territory aforesaid, being duly sworn, depose and say that a certain tract or piece of land, situated as follows, viz: . . . [Then follows description as above], was occupied and cultivated by Antoine Barth, in the year A.D. 1803; the said Antoine Barth sold the said piece or tract of land to John Campbell, who shortly after sold and conveyed away the same to John Ecuyer, who died in the year A.D. 1808; that the heirs of the said John Ecuyer occupied and cultivated the said tract or piece of land until and after the 1st of July, A.D. 1812; that they have from that day continued to submit to the authority of the United States; that in the year A.D. 1821 they, the said heirs, sold and conveyed the said tract or piece of land, and all their right, title, and interest in the same, to Augustin Grignon.

LAURENT FILLY.

his

LOUIS X BOSSIRIE.

mark.

The name of Louis Bossirie interlined before signing.

Sworn and subscribed to before me this 18th day of September, A.D. 1823.

J. G. PORLIER, *J.P.*

DETROIT, October 31, 1823.

In the preceding case of Augustin Grignon, at the portage of Wisconsin, the commissioners do not consider the claim as coming within their powers; it is recommended for confirmation, saving the rights of the heirs of John Ecuyer, deceased.

Page 70, same work, shows that the heirs of Ecuyer denied the sale to Grignon.

Claim of Benjamin Ecuyer.

Je, Benjamin Ecuyer, entre mon clame d'un lot de terre, situé au portage du Ouisconsin, courant de la rive du fleuve sur la rivière de Renards, un demi mille, plus ou moins, et contenant une section, cultivé et possédé par Jean Ecuyler [*sic*], un dix-huit cent huit, et par ses héritiers depuis en dix-huit cent douze.

his
BENJAMIN × ECUYER.
mark.

Temoins: J. G. PORLIER.

Les soussignés, Laurent Filly et Louis Boufre, certifient que le lot réclamé par Benjamin Ecuyer, au portage du Ouisconsin, a été possédé et cultivé par sa famille, en dix-huit cent douze; et que le dit Benjamin Ecuyer n'a jamais porté les armes contre les Etats Unis.

LAURENT FILLY.
his
LOUIS × BOUFRE.
mark.

BAYE VERTE, la 18th Septembre, 1823.

Sworn and subscribed to before me this 18th day of September, 1823.

J. G. PORLIER, *Justice of the Peace.*

DETROIT, October 31, 1823.

The tract alluded to in the preceding claim has been recommended for confirmation to Augustin Grignon, reserving the rights of the heirs of John Ecuyer, deceased.

These transcripts from the report of the commissioners on land claims in the Territory of Michigan, are well illustrated by comparison with "Augustin Grignon's Recollections" in the *Collections* of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin [for 1856], Volume III, page 288. Augustin Grignon was the son of Pierre Grignon, Sr., who was the son-in-law of Sieur de Langlade; Augustin Grignon was born in 1780. In these recollections he says:

LAURENT BARTH, a trader from Mackinaw, wintered on the St. Croix river, at the same time, and in the same neighborhood, with JACQUES PORLIER and CHARLES REAUME, in 1792-93. On the return of the traders in the spring of 1793, BARTH stopped at the Portage, having his family with him. He purchased from the Winnebagoes the privilege of transporting goods over the Portage. This was the commencement of the settlement at that point. The elder DE KAU-RY soon after arrived there with a few of his people from Lake Puckawa, and commenced the Indian settlement on the Wisconsin, about two miles above the Portage;

others came down from Lake Puckawa, and the village increased in size and importance. When BARTH first located, he built a house at the Portage, but finding the water overflowed the locality, he removed the next year to the higher ground half a mile above. The next settler was JEAN LECUYER, a brother-in-law of the chief DE KAU-RY, who went there in 1798, and who also obtained permission to transport goods over the Portage. The goods were hauled over in carts. BARTH had only a single horse cart; but when LECUYER came, he had several teams and carts, and had a heavy wagon, with a long reach, constructed by a wagon-maker he had brought there, so as to transport barges from river to river. About 1803, Mr. CAMPBELL, who was afterwards the first American Indian Agent at Prairie du Chien, purchased BARTH's right of transportation. CAMPBELL, soon after he purchased BARTH's right, sold out his fixtures to LECUYER, who supposed CAMPBELL was thereby relinquishing all further intentions of the business; but CAMPBELL placed his son, JOHN CAMPBELL, and afterwards his son, DUNCAN CAMPBELL, at the east end of the Portage, and had several teams to convey goods, and a large wagon to transport barges. After he sold out his transportation right, BARTH removed to Prairie du Chien, where he died before the war of 1812. After CAMPBELL's death in a duel, as already related, about 1808, his business was closed up; and about two years afterwards, LECUYER sickened and died, leaving several children. After LECUYER's death, his widow employed LAURENT FILY to continue the business in her behalf, and he continued till about the commencement of the war, when FRANCIS ROY, a son of JOSEPH ROY of Green Bay, married THERESE, daughter of Mrs. LECUYER, and took charge of the business, and continued in it many years. Mr. ROY is still living, I believe, at Green Lake. Awhile after the war, JOSEPH ROLETTE commenced the transportation at the Portage, employing PIERRE POQUETTE to manage the business for him. BARTH kept no goods for sale to the Indians, after he sold the balance of his stock brought from the St. Croix. LECUYER always kept a large assortment of goods, and his widow also kept some, as did ROY, but in a much smaller way. JOHN CAMPBELL had goods one year. Several traders at different times, after BARTH's settlement, wintered there, and traded with the Winnebagoes; I spent two winters there, the first in 1801-'2, and the other, the winter succeeding.

A letter from Hon. Morgan L. Martin states that Ecuyer [sometimes written L'Ecuyer and Lecuyer] had five children, and that this claim was located in reference to the old portage trail between the Fox and Wisconsin.

In accordance with the recommendation of the land-claim commissioners above given, the United States gave the following patent to Grignon:

The United States of America.

To all to whom these presents shall come, Greeting;

Know ye, That, there has been deposited in the General Land office a Certificate, numbered two hundred and Sixty Six of the Register of the Land office at Detroit in the territory of Michigan, whereby it appears, that by the second section of the act of Congress, approved on the seventeenth day of April one thousand eight hundred and twenty eight, entitled, "An act to confirm certain claims to land in the Territory of Michigan", Augustin Grignon was confirmed, saving the rights of the heirs of John Ecuyer deceased, in his claim in Volume numbered One of the Reports of the Commissioners on land claims in the territory of Michigan, to the tract of land containing Six hundred and forty eight acres and eighty two hundreds of an acre, situate at the portage of the Ouisconsin & Fox rivers, bounded and described as follows to Wit:

Beginning on the North east bank of Ouisconsin river, one fourth of a mile below the landing place, at a post, from which a Birch twelve inches diameter bears North thirty five degrees West distant eleven links, and a Birch fourteen inches diameter bears South Sixty four degrees East distant Seventy five links, thence up the river, North forty degrees West,

twenty chains to the landing place, (entered prairie at five chains) North Seventy degrees West, five chains, North Sixty one degrees West, twenty six chains and fifty links, (at three chains foot of Island) South Eighty one degrees West, eight chains and fifty links to an aspen seven inches diameter corner on the bank of the river; thence North ten degrees & fifteen minutes West thirty chains through prairie to the top of hill to the corner of the picketts which surround the grave of the late John Ecuyer no post, no bearings near—thence North Fifty degrees east (at fifteen chains enter barrens after passing through old field—at forty one chains a pond, at forty six chains left the pond and at fifty eight chains a Wet prairie) one hundred and eighteen chains to a post on left bank of Fox river, from which a White Oak five inches diameter bears North fifty six and a half degrees West distant three chains and forty six links; thence up Fox river, South five degrees West, three chains, South Sixteen degrees West nine chains and fifty links to landing place at portage, South forty seven degrees East, twenty three chains and forty links to a post on the margin of river, in a marsh; thence South twenty five degrees and thirty minutes West, One hundred and Sixteen chains and Seventy links, (entering timbered land at one hundred chains) to the beginning.

There is therefore granted by the United States, unto the said Augustin Grignon and to his heirs, saving any right, title, or claim which the said heirs of John Ecuyer deceased, may have in and to the same, the tract of land above described: To have and to hold the said tract with the appurtenances, unto the said Augustin Grignon and to his heirs and assigns forever, saving as aforesaid any right, title or claim which the said heirs of John Ecuyer deceased, may have in and to the hereby granted premises.

In testimony whereof, I Andrew Jackson President of the United States, have caused (L S) these letters to be made patent, and the Seal of the General Land office to be hereunto affixed.

Given under my hand at the City of Washington the twenty sixth day of April in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty two and of the Independence of the United States the fifty sixth.

By the President

Andrew Jackson

Elijah Hayward—Commissioner of the Genl. Land office.⁹

Recorded on Friday, the 17th of August, A. D. 1832, at 6 o'clock P.M.

Samuel Irwin, Deputy Register

The following abridgement of the first deeds recorded in Columbia County (transcribed from Brown County Records, Territory of Michigan), show that both the heirs of Ecuyer and Grignon transferred their claims as follows:

Joseph Pocate [Pauquette]	} Undivided one-fifth of "Grignon Tract"
and wife,	
to	
Daniel Whitney.	

Executed Oct. 30, 1828.

Recorded Nov. 10, 1828.

Pocate's wife was Felicita.

Simon Lecuyer	} Undivided one-fifth of Grignon Tract.
to	
Joseph Pocate.	

Executed Oct. 30, 1828.

Recorded Nov. 3, 1828.

⁹ The text of this patent as here printed follows the record copy in the General Land Office, Washington, D. C.—Editors.

In the acknowledgment are the following words: "Personally came before me the undersigned, one of the justices of the county court aforesaid, Simon Lecuyer, reputed son of the late Jean Lecuyer or Ecuyer," etc.

Augustin Grignon and wife }
to
Daniel Whitney. }
Conveyed the entire tract June 18, 1832.

United States }
to } Patent before cited.
Augustin Grignon. }

Executed April 26, 1832.

Benjamin Ecuyer }
to } Undivided one-fifth of Grignon Tract.
Daniel Whitney. }

Executed Feb. 16, 1833.

Recorded Feb. 23, 1833.

Benjamin Ecuyer }
to }
Robert Irwin, Jr., } Undivided one-fifth of Grignon Tract, with property.
and }
Alex. J. Irwin. }

Executed June 11, 1832.

Recorded June 15, 1832.

Robert Irwin, Jr., }
and }
Alex. J. Irwin } Undivided one-fifth of Grignon Tract.
to }
Benjamin Ecuyer. }

Executed Feb. 16, 1833.

In the Clerk of Court's Office, Columbia County, under head of "I" is the document which is here abridged:

Deposition of Henry Merrill.

September 7, 1854, in the matter of Benjamin L. Webb, to perpetuate testimony.

I know Jaques L'Ecuyer, have known him from 15 to 20 years; according to the statements of the said Jaques L'Ecuyer to me, he is now 54 or 55 years old; I should judge that he was over 50 years of age. He, the said Ecuyer, is a farmer or laborer.

I have heard Jaques L'Ecuyer say that he had sold his interest in and to the 648.82 acres of land at the portage known as the Grignon Tract, to one Joseph Pauquette. I saw Jaques L'Ecuyer in August, 1853, at Long Prairie, in Minnesota, at which time he told me he had sold his said interest in said Grignon tract to said Pauquette and had signed a paper which he supposed was a receipt, he having received a part of the payment for said lands in goods and a part in money from the said Pauquette. He said that he had been fully paid for his interest in said land at said Portage by said Pauquette. Ecuyer did not seem to understand what the paper was he had signed, but supposed it was a receipt. I understand from Jaques L'Ecuyer that the said sale took place many years ago, but he did not fix the date of it.

Thus it will be seen that the claims of both Ecuyer and Grignon were secured by Whitney. The subsequent disposition of the land is in brief as follows: 1836, it passed to "Wisconsin Shot Co.," the consideration being \$12,500; 1839,

"Portage Canal Co." purchased it for \$34,234.61. The Shot Company, it appears, again came into possession of the property, for in 1842 it was sold by them to Benjamin L. Webb, and in 1844 Alvin Bronson became the purchaser of an undivided four-nineteenths of the claim, paying Webb therefor \$2,500. In 1849 a plat of the town of Fort Winnebago, covering the Grignon claim, was made to Messrs. Webb and Bronson.

A more complete account of these later transactions will be found in *The History of Columbia County, Wisconsin*, page 601.

In connection with the grave of Lecuyer, which is referred to in the descriptions of this claim, the following facts are of interest.

An ordinance of the city of Portage (passed Feb. 27, 1855), provided "That on and after the 28th day of March, 1855, the graves at or near the intersection of and within the streets of said city, known as Conant and Adams streets, shall be removed by the city marshal, said graves being obstructions in said streets."

Conant street was ordered graded June 3, 1867, and the work commenced that season. It was some time during the summer of that year that the grading brought to light the remains previously interred in that old cemetery. I remember seeing them carried away from the place described as being the grave of Lecuyer, and doubtless among these mouldering relics were those of the pioneer himself.

F. J. T.

POST-BELLUM SOUTHERN RENTAL CONTRACTS

ROSSER H. TAYLOR

*Department of History
Furman University
Greenville, South Carolina*

INTRODUCTION

The economic dislocation in the South immediately following the War for Southern Independence, particularly in the field of labor relations, brought recourse to various adjustments looking toward reconciling the interests of the landlords and the landless freedmen. The abrupt change from slaves to free labor created a situation briefly anticipated and for which no adequate program had been evolved.

At first, the freedmen were generally disposed to enjoy their new-found liberty by ranging around the countryside awaiting a distribution of land in 40-acre tracts.¹ In view of the general unrest among the freedmen, it was difficult in most quarters to persuade them to enter into labor contracts with their former owners.² By 1867, the Negroes, their hopes of obtaining "forty acres and a mule" blasted, were ready to accept the advice of the Freedmen's Bureau to seek employment on farms and plantations.

White landowners of the South had very little cash for hiring labor, black or white, and very little faith in the Negro as a free laborer.³ Yet, the land had to be cultivated and the freedmen given employment. White immigrant labor was preferred,⁴ but, as this type of labor was not immediately available, it was necessary to come to terms with the Negroes. With misgivings and distaste, landowners began about 1867 to give freedmen a share of the crop made by them in lieu of wages.

The portion of the crop deemed to be the equivalent of annual wages was regarded generally as one-third. In a few years, the fiction of wages was dropped, and the sharecropper was given a larger share of the crop.⁵ Ordi-

¹ Walter L. Fleming, ed., *Documentary History of Reconstruction*, 1:354 (Cleveland, 1906). See also Oscar Zeichner, "The Transition from Slave to Free Agricultural Labor in the Southern States," *Agricultural History*, 13:22-32 (Washington, D. C., 1939); and B. I. Wiley, "Salient Changes in Southern Agriculture since the Civil War," *ibid.*, 65-76.

² In South Carolina General Saxton urged the freedmen to abandon their hopes of free land and to sign labor contracts approved by the Freedmen's Bureau.—Francis B. Simkins and Robert H. Woody, *South Carolina during Reconstruction*, 250 (Chapel Hill, N. C., 1932).

³ Willoughby Newton, in *American Farmer* (Baltimore), August 1866, p. 56-57; Fleming, *Documentary History of Reconstruction*, 1:248-249.

⁴ George W. Gift to the editors, Memphis, Tenn., Feb. 15, 1868, in *Southern Cultivator*, 26:93 (Athens, Ga., 1868).

⁵ Marjorie S. Mendenhall, "The Rise of Southern Tenancy," *Yale Review*, 27:124 (New Haven, Conn., 1937).

narily, when the landlord furnished the land, tools, team, and tenement, the cropper was given one-half of the crop. The increased use of commercial fertilizers compelled the insertion in rental contracts of a clause fixing the percentages of the cost of the fertilizer to be borne by the landlord and the tenant or cropper respectively.

While sharecropping was the most common form of dependent land tenure, there were various other types of tenancy. "Standing rent" involved the renting of land for a specified amount of produce—usually lint cotton. There was also cash rent which was accounted standing rent. Under another form, known as "the third and fourth arrangement," the tenant furnished tools, team, and provisions and turned over one-third or one-fourth of the crop to the landlord. Here also there was some variation in practice. In some areas the landlord received a larger share of the grain than of the cotton.

There was also, within a given framework, some diversity in the manner of supplying the sharecropper with food and clothing while the crop was being made. More often than not, the landlord furnished the sharecropper a stipulated sum of money payable in monthly installments until the crop was "laid by." In lieu of money, the landlord frequently would make arrangements with a time merchant to furnish the cropper provisions within certain limits. In either case, the landlord was secured by a prior lien on the crop.⁶ Tenants of good reputation could obtain supplies from a time merchant on open account at exorbitant prices; but tenants who were remiss in paying their debts must hypothecate any valuable property to which they held title or give a crop lien as security for supplies.

The rental contracts here printed are in the library of Furman University at Greenville, South Carolina. In preparing the transcription for printing, special care has been taken to follow the capitalization, spelling, and punctuation of the original text. With the exception of the first, the contracts illustrate two typical forms of land tenure in the post-bellum South, namely, sharecropping and standing rent. It is obvious that all the contracts were drawn with a view to safeguarding the interests of the landlord. If, at the end of the year, the landlord was pleased with the management of the crop, the tenant or cropper would be requested to remain another year. Otherwise, the incumbent would be advised to try his fortune elsewhere. For exceptionally good tenants, there was occasionally competition among landlords; but, by and large, the landless blacks and whites moved from community to community with disturbing frequency.

THE RENTAL CONTRACTS

I

South Carolina

Laurnes Dist. Jany. 1st. 1868

Know all men by these presents that I—John D. Williams of the Dist and State aforesaid have agreed to give to the following negroes on my White Plains plantation in said Dist one third of all the corn, sweet potatoes, wheat

⁶ South Carolina Laws, *Statutes at Large*, 15:788.

& Cotton or oats & Malassus the said negroes do rais on Said plantation I am to furnish as much mule or horse power & provision for the Mules & horses as may be necessary to Cultivate the lands they plant. the negroes are to Cloth & feed themselves & pay all other necessary expenses they need—medical bills & and I am to let them have corn—bacon—at the current prices for such articles—the negroes hereby consenting and binding themselves to abide and settle by the accounts kept against them by myself or by my Agent for articles supplide and furnished them and tha binds them Selves to be steady & attentive to there work at all times and to work at keeping in repair all the fences on Said plantation and assist in cuting & taking care of—all the grain crops on Said plantation and work by the direction of me or my Agent—at all times to command theire Services untill Jan 1st 1869—

They are to be careful of all animals or emplements used by them shall protect the same from enjury from other pearsons & shall be answerable for all propity lost—distroyed or enjured by their negligence dishonesty or bad faith and should any of them depart from the farm or from any services at any time with out our approval they shall forfeit one dollar per day, for the first time and for the second time without good cause they shall forfeit all of their interest in the crop their to me the enjured person—they shall not be allowed to keep firearms or deadly weapons or ardent Spirits and they shall obey all lawful orders from me or my Agent and shall be honest—truthful—sober—civel—diligent in their business & for all wilful Disobedience of any lawful orders from me or my Agent drunkenness moral or legal misconduct want of respects or civility to me or my Agent or to my Family or any elce, I am permitted to discharge them forfeiting any claims upon me for any part of the crop as for this agreement & they are to assist in Sowing all of the Small Grain next fall & winter and in a settlement with them at the end of the year earch hand is to draw their portion of their crop fall hands—far three forths hands—half or one forth hands as is Set down opposite their names as witness our hands & Seals January 1st, 1868

Moses Nathan	1 full hand ⁷
Jake Chappal	" " "
Milly Williams	$\frac{1}{2}$ "
Easter Williams	" "
Mack Williams	

Laurnes Dist
South Carolina

We the white labores now employed by John. D. Williams on his white plains plantation have lisened and heard read the foregoing Contract on this Sheet of paper assign equal for the black laborers employed by him on said place and we are perfectly Satisfied with it and heare by bind our selves to abide & be Governed & Controwed by it

As witness our hands & seals this January 1st 1868

Wm Wyatte	1 fall hand	Wm. Wyatte
John Wyatte	1 fall hand	John Wyatte
Packingham Wyatte	$\frac{1}{2}$ " "	P Wyatte
Franklin Wyatte	$\frac{1}{2}$ " "	F Wyatte
R M Hughes	1 fall hand	R M Hughes
B G Pollard	1 fall hand	B G Pollard
G W Pollard	1 fall hand	George Washington Pollard

⁷ All of the Negroes and two of the whites made their marks.

II

State of South Carolina
Laurnee County

This Contract made on the first day of January 1896: between Mrs Susan J Hill of the City of Greenville S. C. of the first part, and Joseph Stoddard of Laurnee County S. C.

Wittnessith—

That the said Susan J Hill rents to the Said Joseph Stoddard her farm, Situated near the Town of Gray Court, in Laurnee County S. C. for the year 1896. Said farm adjoining lands of Oscar Cannon, Gray & others, Containing 88-210 Acres more or less.

The said Joseph Stoddard is to take good care of Said land & premises, And build Stable & Crib on said premises. And terrice all the Cultivated land and run the rowes on a level. And is to cut no wood or timber on the place. Except dead wood for Cooking Purposes while working on the place. And in no case any wood shall be hall off of the plantation. And also agree not to plow the Ground when it is too wet, And in no case Shall rent any of the plantation to any other party. And he shall not plant but one crop upon any portion of Said land.

And the Said Joseph Stoddard Shall pay to the Said Susan J Hill as rent for Said premises, 3200 lbs. two (2) Bales of Good Middling Cotton, Said Bales to weigh five hundred each making one Thousand pounds to be delivered at Greenville S. C. by the 15 day of October 1896.

And the Said Susan J Hill reserves the right to Sow Grains on the premises as soon as the crop is gathered if she desires to do so.

And said Joseph Stoddard agrees to turn over to the said Susan J Hill the said premises, in good Condition, as soon after the crop is gathered as practicable.

Witness our hands & Seals this Dec 27 day of 1896.

Witness

F. G. Massey
Richard Stoddard
John C Henderson

Susan J Hill
Joe Stoddard
Richard Stoddard

III

State of South Carolina
Laurens County

This Contract made on the 1st day January 1900 between Susan J. Hill of the City of Greenville of the 1st part and James S. Howard of the 2ⁿ part, a citizen of Laurens County witnesses

That the Said Susan J. Hill rents to the Said James S Howard her farm situated near the town of Gray Court in Laurens County S. C. for the year 1900. Said farm adjourning lands of Oscar Cannon R. L. Gray & others containing 210 acres more or less The Said Jas S. Howard is to take good care of the said land and premises and to terrace all the unterraced cultivated land where needed & Keep in good repair the terraces already completed and to run the rows on a level. He is not to cut any green wood or timber nor permit any one else to do so, but he Can use dead timber for ordinary household purposes and in no case shall any wood be hauled off the plantation. It is also agreed that he shall not plow the ground when too wet & that in no case shall he sublet to any other person any portion of the said plantation

And the said James S Howard shall pay to the said Susan J Hill as rent for the said

premises (3200) Thirty two Hundred pounds of middling cotton one half to be delivered on Oct 15 the other Nov 1st-1900. And the Said Susan J Hill reserves the right to sow small grains on the premises as soon as the crop is gathered is she so desires.

And the said James Howard agrees To turn to said Susan J Hill the Said premises in good Condition and as soon as practicable after Crop is gathered

Witness our hands & seals this the 1st day of Jan. 1900

Tolver Robertson

J. S. Howard

It is further agreed that no pine Straw shall be hauled from the premises & that no land shall be planted for a second crop

Witness our Hands & seals

Chas Bishop

Susan J. Hill

Tolver Robertson

J. S. Howard

IV

State of South Carolina
County of Laurens

This contract this day made and entered into between Susan J. Hill of Greenville, S. C. of the first part and Alvin Thompson of Laurens County of the second part witnesseth:

That the party of the first part rents to the second part a farm situated in Dials Township, Laurens County, near Gray-Court for the year 1902, upon the following terms:

The said party of the first part furnishes to the said party of the second part, One mule and all necessarily tools and impliments to be used by said party of the second part in making and gathering his crop; and also agrees to furnish him Seventy (70) dollars to be paid in the following payments: Ten (10) dollars to be paid on the 1st of every month until all is paid, and the said party of the second part agrees to to give to the party of the first part a first lien on his entire crop to secure the same.

And the party of the second part agrees to pay as rent to the party of the first part one half ($\frac{1}{2}$) of his entire crop, that is made on the place and he is to pay all debts to the 1st party out of the 1st proceeds.

The mule and all the farming tools, are to be returned to the party of the 1st part, after the crop is made and gathered in good condition.

The party of the second part also agrees to take good care of the place, cultivate the same in good style keep the terraces in good order and not to plow the land when too wet, and not subrent any of the land, and not to take any wood, timber or pine straw off the place, nor cut any green timber, or allow the same to be done by others.

And he shall not plant but one crop upon any portion of said land without permission, and said party of the 1st part reserves the right to sow grain on the premises as soon as the crop is gathered if she desires to do so, and said party of the second part agrees to turn over to the said party of the 1st part the premises in good condition, as soon after the crop is gathered as practicable.

Witness whereof we have hereunto set our hands & seals this 1st day of January A. D. 1902.

Witnesses

John Seal Hill Jr

Susan J. Hill

John C Henderson

Alvin Thompson

V

Gray Court, S. C.

State of South Carolina County of Laurnes^a

This Contract This day made and entered into between J. S. Hill of Laurnes County, S. C. of the first part and Milton T. Chaney of Laurnes County of the Second part

Witnesseth—That the party of the first part rents to the of the Second part A farm Situated in Dials Township Laurnes County near Gray Court for the year 1907—upon the following terms—

The said party of the first part furnishes to the Said party of the Second part, one mule and all necessarily tools and impliments to be used by Said party of the Second part in making and Gathering his crop. And also agrees to furnish him Six dollars per month untill the crop is laid by Augt 9 to be paid in the following payments Six (6) dollars to be paid on the first-1st of every month untill all is paid—and the Said party of the Second part agrees to Give to the party of the first part A first Lien on his entire crop to Secure the Same. And the party of the Second part agrees to pay as rent to the party of the first part one half (½) of his entire crop That is made on the place and he is to pay all debts to the first party out of the first proceeds—The mule and all the farming Tools are to be returned to the party of the first part after the Crop is made and Gathered in good Condition—The party of the Second part also agrees to take Good care of the place Cultivates the Same in good order and not to plow the land when two wet and not Subrent any of the land and not take any wood Timber or pine Straw off of the place nor cut any Green timber or allow the Same to be done by others—

And he shall not plant but one crop upon any portions of Said land without permission—And Said party of the first part reserves the right to Sow Grain on the premises as soon as the crop is Gathered if he desires to do so—

And Said party of the Second part agrees to turn over to the Said party of the first part the premises in good condition as soon after the crop is Gathered as practicable—

In witness whereof we have hereunto Set our hands & Seals this first day of January A. D. 1907

Witnesses

John R. Curry
L. Townes Curry

J. S. Hill
M T Chaney

VI

Graycourt, S. C.
State of South Carolina
Laurens County.

This contract this day made and entered into between Jno. S. Hill of Laurens County S. C. of the first part and Ludie Javais of Laurens County of the second part:

A Farm situated in Dials Township, Laurens County, near Graycourt, S. C. for the year 1907 upon the following terms

The said party of the first part furnishes to the said party of the second part, one mule and all necessary tools & impliments to be used by said party of the second part in making & gathering his crop. And also agrees to furnish him Six Dollars (\$6.00) per month until

^a This contract carries the following indorsement on the back: "South Carolina / Laurens County / John S. Hill / To / M. T. Chaney / Rent Contract / for 1907".

the crop is laid by August 1st 1907 to be paid in the following payments: Six Dollars to be paid on the 1st day of each month until all is paid, and the party of the second part agrees to give to the party of the first part a first lien on his entire crop to secure the same. And the party of the second part agrees to pay as rent to the party of the first part one half ($\frac{1}{2}$) of his entire crop that is made on the place, and he is to pay all debts to the 1st party out of the 1st proceeds. The mule and all the farming tools are to be returned to the party of the 1st part, after the crop is made and gathered in good condition. The party of the second part also agrees to take good care of the place, cultivate the same in good style, keep the terraces in good order and not to plow the land when too wet, and not subrent any of the land and not to take any wood, timber or pine straw off of the place, nor cut any green timber or allow the same to be done by others. And he shall not plant but one crop upon any part of said land without permission and said party of the first part reserves the right to sow grain on the premises as soon as the crop is gathered is he desires to do so.

And said party of the second part agrees to turn over to the said party of the first part the place in good condition as soon after the crop is gathered as practicable.

In witness where of we have hereunto set our hands and seals this first day of January A. D. 1907.

Witnesses

A. W. Hill
J. P. Davenport

J. S. Hill
Ludie Javais

VII

Gray Court S. C.

State of South Carolina County of Laurens

This Contract this day made and entered into between Jno. L. Hill of Laurens County S. C. of the first part And James M. Tumbling, T. R. Tumbling, W. D. Tumbling, all of Laurens County the second parties witnesith that the party of the first part Rents to the Parties of second parts a Farm Situated in Laurens County Dials Township near Gray Court, S. C. for the Year 1909. Upon the following terms—

The Said Party of first part Agrees to furnish or Rent to the parties of second parts Farms Lands as follows. All the tract of Land Known as the Howe tract Situated on North Side of main Road Leading from Gray Court to Dials Church. Also tract situated on South side of said Road. Bounded by lands of Mrs Sallie Curry on West, And Joe Hunter on the North. Containing fifty Eight acres More or Less. of Cultivable Lands. Also Eighteen acres more or Less Situated on East Side of Road leading to Curry Place. Bounded on East by R. L Gray.

Parties of Second part agree to Cultivate said Lands in good Style, Keep all terraces in good Repair, farther Partys of Second part agree to not cut Any Green timbers, or suffer any other parties to cut or destroy any Green timbers or Haul off any Pine Straw or Litter of any Kind. Party of first part Agrees to sell to partys of second Part Seventy five Bushel of Corn more or Less at One Dollar (\$1.00) per Bushel. Also twelve hundred Bundles fodder more or less at two Dollars (\$2.00) per hundred Bundles. Also twenty five Bales of peovine Hay at one Dollar (\$1.00) per Bale. Party of first part agress to furnish Parties of second part thirty Dollars per Month for six Months Commencing with Feby 1st 1909 through July. And twenty Dollars for Month of August 1909.

Parties of second part agrees pay for uses of Lands to party of first part Five Bales of

Strict Middling Lint Cotton each Bale is to weigh five hundred pounds each. Said Rent to be paid from first Cotton Gathered on Said Lands.

Next Consideration is, partys of second Part agrees to use all cotton or crops gathered after Rents are Satisfied to pay or Satisfy Claim held by party of first part, for money and supplies advanced to partys of second part.

Partys of Second Part agrees also to give party of first part, first Lien and Mortgage on crop to Secure Said Debts. Partys of Second part agrees to furnish their own stock & tools to make Said Crops

In witness Whereof We have hereunto Set our hands & seals this tenth day December A. D. 1908

Witness = W. H. MKinney

A. W. Hill

C. W. Taylor

S. L. Curry

John S. Hill⁹

his

James X M. Tumblind
mark

W. D. Tumbling
his

T. R. X Tumbling
mark

⁹ The four names on this contract are followed by improvised seals.